

2019 Churchill Fellowship

**Investigate ways hands-on upcycling actions
help reduce textile waste and enhance wellbeing**



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The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust report by Jane Milburn, Churchill Fellow 2019: ***Investigate ways hands-on upcycling actions help reduce textile waste and enhance wellbeing.***

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Signed: **Jane Milburn**

Dated: 21 September 2022

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I thank all my interviewees who gave their time and ideas to support this study. Special thanks to Crispina French, Ros Studd, and friends of friends Cheri and John Holdren who invited me to stay in their homes, and Katherine Soucie for friendship and guidance with interpretation.

I acknowledge that undertaking the Fellowship involved international flights, local transport, hotels and mobile food solutions, all of which are carbon-intensive activities. I believe the insights, sharing and learning make that investment worthwhile.

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Keywords

#slowclothing, #slowfashion, #fashion, #sustainability, #mending, #agency, #makingforwellbeing, #permaculture, #textilewaste, #earthlogic

Cover photo: Jane Milburn wearing her project about ways of enabling wearers to become independent of fast fashion. Jane used an Alabama Chanin pattern from her local library and hand-stitched this dress from local Australian cotton. It was dyed in upstate New York with Katrina Rodabaugh (walnut) and in Cape Cod with Amy DuFault (cutch). The necklace Jane made with Amy from an upcycled t-shirt. The cardigan was thrifted, dyed and gifted by Amy Lou Stein in Somerville/Boston. Photo by Ros Studd in Aberdeen, Scotland.

Background

This project was inspired from postgraduate study with the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation which led me to weave skills and experience from a rural journalism and communications career into purposeful values-based slow clothing advocacy in 2012 and a decade later be awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for service to fashion sustainability.

As a lifelong slow fashion practitioner, I make and adapt my own clothes to complement those purchased new or thrifted. Growing up on farms and studying agricultural science sparked appreciation of natural fibres while making skills were learned inter-generationally, including from my mother, Elizabeth Capon, a teacher and co-author of home economics text book *Focus on Living*.

My activation in this space coincided with a global awakening after the 2013 Rana Plaza factory collapse in Bangladesh exposed what is known as fast fashion. I set up [Textile Beat](#), did a year-long upcycling project [Sew it Again](#), and this independent research evolved into a book *Slow Clothing: finding meaning in what we wear* published in 2017.

Slow Clothing is a way for wearers to choose, wear and care for clothes to ensure they bring meaning, value and joy to every day. The Slow Clothing Manifesto (Appendix 1) outlines simple, everyday practices to minimise our material footprint: think, natural, quality, local, few, care, make, revive, adapt and salvage. At this time of rising concern about the climate crisis, biodiversity loss and pollution, slow clothing is a pathway to making a difference through our clothing choices. When the global pandemic delayed this Churchill Fellowship, I did a Permaculture Design Course and Permaculture Teacher Training and can now see that slow clothing is about applying permaculture in the wardrobe (Appendix 3).

During my Fellowship this year, I met people across the world responding proactively to concerns about the social and environmental impact of their wardrobes and gaining wellbeing benefits in the process. A key highlight was meeting Professor Kate Fletcher, at Bollington in the United Kingdom, and learning about the *Earth Logic: Fashion Action Research Plan* which is grounded in the permaculture ethics of earth care, people care and fair share.

In this photo with Kate Fletcher, *below*, I am wearing my project, a red silk dress I created from five old garments that I regularly wear with the Instagram hashtag #adventuresofthereddress.



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Project Overview

Project Title: Investigate ways hands-on upcycling actions help reduce textile waste and enhance wellbeing.

This Churchill Fellowship is a multidisciplinary project at the intersection of culture, creativity, science, health and wellbeing in the way we dress. It aims to inspire social change and contribute to climate action and sustainable living across communities by shifting the culture of fast fashion consumption towards slow clothing philosophy and practice. The project is focused on wearers' discretionary choices and actions, rather than the industry or uniforms. The interviewees selected are educators, designers, influencers and practitioners engaged in their wardrobes and offer diverse entry points to enable and inspire others.

There has been a global awakening about the environmental and social issues around what we wear. You can google graphic images of clothing piles washed up on the beach in Ghana or dumped in the desert in Chile as inappropriate graveyards for clothing discards from Australia and other affluent Western countries like the ones I visited on this Fellowship. You can watch documentaries, read books, magazine and media stories carrying the message of deleterious impacts of excessive production and consumption.

Even during my Fellowship, *New Scientist* magazine's cover story, *right*, asked the question Can Fashion Ever Be Green? (June 4, 2022) and its editorial said "Make do and mend: The fashion world must change its environmentally destructive ways". It concluded with this comment: *"Here's to a make-do-and-mend mindset becoming mainstream – and even fashionable."* These actions are the essence of my Churchill Fellowship which investigates wearers being hands-on and taking charge of their wardrobe to reduce waste and enhance wellbeing.

This report highlights citizens at the forefront of social change because they are independent from fast fashion. They have developed their own style, regenerated their own agency and empowered themselves through fit-for-purpose wardrobe solutions.

What we wear is integral to how we live. The need for this project has arisen because global supply chains are so efficient that consumers have lost touch with their source. Never in history has there been so many clothes in the world. A new [Australian Fashion Council](#) Clothing Data Report¹ confirms Australians are amongst the highest consumers, buying nearly 15kg of new clothing or an average of 56 items per person in 2018-19, and the number of times clothes are worn before disposal is decreasing.

Fast fashion and ultra-fast fashion flows from large globalized businesses relying on ridiculous volume and churn, in a model considered by many to be unethical, unsatisfying and unsustainable. It overshadows small, local fashion businesses crafting beautiful clothes designed for longevity as well as the potential for engaged citizens to intervene in their own wardrobes.



This diagram, *right*, summaries the ethical issues which have motivated my work in this space during the past decade. The easy affordability of fast fashion means clothing consumption has risen 2-4 times what we actually need. The clothes are low-cost through the combination of an exploited workforce and synthetic fibres derived from fossil fuel resources. This creates waste and pollution, and a loss of skills and knowledge that previously enabled people to extend the lifespan of their clothes. These changes mean more discarded clothing is either becoming landfill or being exported to developing nations. It is a huge problem that two-thirds of clothes are made from

synthetic fibres that shed microplastic particles when we wash and wear them, and creates the majority of microplastic pollution in oceans. This microplastic is entering the food chain and showing up in our bodies with as-yet-unknown health impacts.



The fashion industry recognises the need for more circular approaches. There is talk and greenwashing but, as yet, no significant clothing-to-clothing recycling because that is complex.

Professor Kate Fletcher [50] told me the circular economy model is “*almost being used as a fig leaf to distract attention from changing things*”. It circulates old-system values, ideas and priorities for furthering economic growth without fixing the broken underpinnings. It also pre-supposes we can control and close a loop when in reality fashion is a leaky open system. **[NOTE: the number after all names links to their details in the Itinerary on page 9 and interviews in Appendix 2 on page 55].**

Prof Fletcher is co-author of *Earth Logic: fashion action research plan*² for profoundly rethinking fashion in the face of the climate crisis. The more I read my copy of *Earth Logic* gifted by Kate and reflect on our conversation at her United Kingdom home in Bollington, the more I see where this Churchill Fellowship nestles within the *Earth Logic* model. It fits under *Learning: new knowledge, skills and mindsets for fashion*, and pertains to how we ‘acquire, care for and mend clothing, how to share clothing, how to want the clothes we already have’.

This Fellowship is about disrupting the fashion system through the power of consumer behaviour and choices because there is no better time for the citizenry to be activated and engaged through everyday practices. It is about taking charge of our clothes, divesting ourselves from dependency on destructive systems by becoming actively engaged in and caring for what we wear rather than passively choosing from the latest offerings. It is grounded in the practices, choices and actions that reduce our material footprint: think, natural, quality, local, few, care, make, revive, adapt and salvage as outlined in The Slow Clothing Manifesto (Appendix 1).

It is about regenerating our own agency and being empowered through skills, knowledge and desire to assemble a wardrobe of garments that we want to wear and keep in service for as long as possible. Agency is attained through simple skills to undertake acts of styling, mending, co-designing, and upcycling to appreciate and value the natural resources that go into clothes and manipulating them to fit our needs. Being more engaged with our clothes is a driver for systemic change as well as bringing with it financial, environmental, empowerment and wellbeing benefits. At its simplest, it is being resourceful and using commonsense; neither expensive nor particularly difficult.

Across the world, I found many individuals, academics, social enterprise and small business change agents envisaging and implementing small and slow solutions that can help people solve problems in their wardrobes. In the context of this project, 'hands-on upcycling actions' generically includes activities such as: thrifting, styling, mending, making, remaking, embellishing, adapting, tinkering, redesigning, restyling, refashioning and repurposing. Reducing textile waste and enhancing wellbeing are potential outcomes from being more involved in our wardrobes and my interviewees affirmed this approach.

A summary of ways people are undertaking actions that help in **REDUCING TEXTILE WASTE** include:

1. restyling and wearing what is already in the wardrobe
2. thrifting, mending and dyeing existing clothes
3. redesigning, co-designing using existing clothing and materials
4. making their own clothes, some hand-stitching to further slow the process
5. liberating and sharing dormant and waste textile resources within local supply chains
6. skill and knowledge sharing within communities
7. supporting local, regenerative natural fibre and design systems

A summary of ways people are **ENHANCING WELLBEING** from hands-on actions include:

1. a sense of empowerment and agency over what they wear
2. a sense of playfulness, joy and self-expression in having interesting clothes
3. feelings of calm, relaxation, self-soothing, distraction, resilience and meditation
4. comfort from slowing down, thinking through making, and being resourceful
5. a felt sense of meaning and mindful connection to self, clothes and community
6. a sense of contributing to broader solutions for fashion waste
7. feelings of interconnection to nature and the natural world

Here are three of many examples of people learning and sharing skills to create change:

- **EMPOWERMENT:** Designer **Cal Patch [25]** teaches people how to use their own body shape and aesthetic to make clothes to suit themselves. Learning from Cal enabled **Sonya Philip [5]** to sew her way out of a clothing drought and author a how-to book *The Act of Sewing*.
- **SKILLS:** Teacher **Ros Studd [38]** responded to the lack of mending skills traditionally learned through schools or families with a free learning platform, while groups such as **Sewing Café Lancaster [48]** gather and engage their community by sharing sewing skills.
- **HEALTH and WELLBEING:** Entrepreneur **Geraldine Tew [4]** observed the lack of making causing un-wellness and created an upcycling workshop program engaging designers such as **Bea Lorimer [3]** to share skills and experiences that can inspire more upcycling at home.

These actions, and this report, form part of what *Earth Logic* describes as an activist knowledge ecology, a platform for the parallel generation of knowledge, action, empowerment and change.

There is no recipe for bringing about behaviour change in the face of decades of fashion conditioning. Change is enabled at the intersection between awareness and motivation, change agents and exemplars, and availability of local resources and education.

The 'making do' in earlier times was born from lack of resources and most people did it. Nowadays 'making do' is more likely to be a response to excess and, ironically, it may be the privileged who are currently most engaged. Modern 'making do' is more about choices and actions to be resourceful and sustainable, more likely about saving the planet than specifically needing to save money.

The people I met have become more self-reliant in various ways by developing skills and insights to make themselves independent of the fashion supply chain. They are reclaiming control of their wardrobe by being more hands-on in creatively making, mending, redesigning or restyling clothes already around them to reduce waste and enhance wellbeing. They are empowered through what they wear and uninterested in slavishly following trends that provide fleeting satisfaction at best.

Through this Fellowship, I tapped into the citizenry swimming against the all-consuming tide. They are engaging in hands-on processes that enable a consumption pause, taking time for self-reflection and working with what is at hand before making considered decisions in any new purchases.

These citizens are showing that culture change is possible when we inform ourselves and learn skills of independence and resourcefulness, and invest time in the process.

This report includes ways that all citizens with a can-do, will-do, mindset can regenerate their agency when they allocate leisure time to resourceful creativity rather than shopping for quick fixes.

RECOMMENDATIONS from my Fellowship are: (more details can be found on pages 44-48)

- A. More education around hand-sewing skills for mending, tinkering and mindfulness
- B. More opportunities to engage and share clothing resources, skills and creativity
- C. Wellbeing services based around regenerating agency in the wardrobe
- D. Redesign services that enable engagement and co-design
- E. More engagement through opportunities to practice permaculture and citizen science
- F. More awareness-raising of unsustainable consumer culture and greenwashing
- G. Localisation to promote and enable place-based fibre systems and culture

There are no easy solutions to complex problems within the fashion sector which is [reportedly](#) responsible for up to 10 percent of annual global carbon emissions. However, the idea that we can keep consuming as usual is clearly unsustainable and all indications are that our survival depends on pushing back against consumerism.

This Fellowship is a step towards changing the consumer culture of dependence on global fast fashion supply chains to one of independent flourishing of local creativity, engagement and connection through what we choose to wear.

It brings focus to the concept of dressing for health and wellbeing rather than status and looks, and outlines how engaged citizens can gain wellbeing benefits by regenerating their own agency using what is around them and, in so doing, contribute to reducing the textile waste burden.

We can't change the world, but what we can do is change the way we live through our everyday practices. Those small decisions and choices for living simply are within our means, they are the steps to leading a modest yet fulfilling life in harmony with the natural world.

As anthropologist Margaret Mead said: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Due to the global coronavirus pandemic, travel was by necessity deferred until April 2022. Countries of similar socio-economic standing to Australia were visited, and unfortunately planned visits to Japan and Europe were not realized due to scheduling changes.

This Fellowship addresses the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: 12 Sustainable Consumption and Production, 3 Good Health and Wellbeing and 13 Climate Action.

Itinerary

Jane Milburn's Churchill Fellowship is documented across 90 social media posts on [Instagram/Facebook](#) between May 1 and June 30, 2022 which appear in Appendix 2 (page 55-82).

All interviewees are listed in chronological order and correspond to recorded interviews uploaded to [YouTube](#) [except numbers **16 and 21**]. The number against their name is included when their comments are referenced within this report. The schedule of meetings, as required in this report, is outlined below.

	Name and date	Location	Subject and YouTube interview	Role and @instagram
1	Karishma Kelsey 1 May 2022	Karishma Designs Auckland, NZ	Style activism, the joy of creating, making and mending https://youtu.be/cxG0BO3f0Hk	educator/practitioner @miraculous_me_movt
2	Melissa Pentecost-Spargo , 2 May	Woven Threads NZ Waihi Beach, NZ	Upcycling and rescuing textiles by adding botanical colour https://youtu.be/dywU83XUslw	Practitioner @woventhreadsNZ
3	Bea Lorimer 3 May 2022	Heke Designs Waiheke Island, NZ	Upcycling to reduce waste and inspire more creative reuse https://youtu.be/X_W-3WvtETc	educator, small business @heke.design
4	Geraldine Tew 4 May 2022	ReCreators Auckland, NZ	Upcycling workshop model of creative making for wellness https://youtu.be/Fqr1RT58yCM	Eco and social justice entrepreneur @therecreatorsnz
5	Sonya Philip 6 May 2022	San Francisco, California US	Sewing her way out of clothing desert, now sharing with others https://youtu.be/m7K645uFiyE	Practitioner/author @sonyaphilip
6	William Barros 7 May 2022	SCRAP, San Francisco, US	Taking pride in creative reuse through SCRAP https://youtu.be/yRtTYTNnhFs	Practitioner/sewist @scrapsf
7	Jake Lindsay 7 May 2022	SCRAP, San Francisco, US	Poverty as entry into creativity https://youtu.be/AcZg1XxRL4I	Practitioner/artist @dickwillows
8	Keri Ponce 8 May 2022	Potter Valley, California, US	Purpose + meditation through the mending process https://youtu.be/rWUelHKDlc	Practitioner/farmer @rumenboard
9	Katie Ring 8 May 2022	Sebastapol, California, US	Seeking more creative connection to what she wears https://youtu.be/DDrU5FS_u08	Practitioner/chef
10	Craig Wilkinson 8 May 2022	Fibershed Learning Center San Geronimo US	Growing indigo plants for natural colour (second half) https://youtu.be/0--n-S8EMdA	Indigo farmer @craigsindigo
11	Rebecca Burgess 8 May 2022	Fibershed Learning Center San Geronimo US	Building local textile networks and regenerative industry https://youtu.be/0--n-S8EMdA	Fibershed founder and author @fibershed_
12	Bron McInerney 10 May 2022	FabMo, Sunnyvale, California US	Landfill diversion by creative reuse (first speaker) https://youtu.be/egNtokoRDI4	treasurer/volunteer @fabmoinc
13	Katherine Latson 10 May 2022	FabMo, Sunnyvale, California US	renovating clothes with paint and dye (second speaker) https://youtu.be/egNtokoRDI4	Volunteer @fabmoinc

14	Melissa Wilson 10 May 2022	FabMo, Sunnyvale, California US	Adapting clothes to suit her own body shape (third speaker) https://youtu.be/egNtokoRDI4	Volunteer @fabmoinc
15	Jaki Canterbury 10 May 2022	Monterey, California, US	Stitching community around her slowfiber business https://youtu.be/F5m-qM73SNM	Practitioner/business @slowfiber
16	Erin Gafill 10 May 2022	Big Sur, California, US (via zoom)	Benefits of a creative childhood https://textilebeat.com/lifelong-benefits-of-creative-childhood/	Practitioner/painter @erinleegafill
17	Dina Fayer 11 May 2022	San Francisco, California, US	Resurgent interest in sewing with pandemic https://youtu.be/8tDRxMG4a7M	Britex Fabrics business manager @britexfabrics
18	Kate Sekules 13 May 2022	New York City, New York, US	Fun garment interventions using needle and thread https://youtu.be/Yz124S59ECE	Practitioner, academic and author @visiblement
19	Dhamar Romo Chanez , 14 May	Brooklyn, New York, US	On motivations to reduce textile waste having agency to create https://youtu.be/PHbAlkQ9_w8	Practitioner/recycling business @fab_scrap
20	Emi Stearn 14 May 2022	Brooklyn, New York, US	Creating her own clothing as art https://youtu.be/toAo9_mshSc	Practitioner/recycling business #emu.kitty
21	Renew by Eileen Fisher 14 May	Irvington, New York, US	Waste No More, taking back clothes (not formally interviewed)	Innovative business @wastenomore
22	Assoc Prof Otto Von Busch , 15 May 2022	Brooklyn, New York, US	On developing agency and courage in clothing culture https://youtu.be/eHjg_sLajVM	Parsons School of Fashion practitioner/academic
23	Melanie Falick 17 May 2022	Hudson Valley, Upstate NY, US	On remembering our heritage as makers https://youtu.be/ILgmaTbzUfw	Practitioner/author @melaniefalick
24	Katrina Rodabaugh 18 May 2022	Germantown, Upstate NY, US STUDIO DAY	Mending and the value embedded in our clothes https://youtu.be/IO7rB6Cq2WM	Practitioner/author @katrinarodabaugh
25	Cal Patch 19 May 2022 WORKSHOP	Kerhonkson, New York, US	Gaining agency by using own measurements to make for self https://youtu.be/RbLp-RsHS5k	Practitioner/teacher @hodgepotchfarm
26	Brece Honeycutt 20 May 2022	Sheffield, Massachusetts US	On making clothes and making aware of connection to nature https://youtu.be/-nv93Bp5whA	Practitioner/artist @brece_honeycutt
27	Crispina ffrench 21 May 2022	Becket, Massachusetts	On the infinite benefits of reusing textiles https://youtu.be/R6lJn4ufx6U	Practitioner/business @crispinaffrench
28	Kathryn Greenwood Swanson , 22 May 2022	Turners Falls, Massachusetts	Sewing as cool and affordable self- sufficiency https://youtu.be/JEa8YG1M8S8	Practitioner/business Swanson's Fabrics @swansonsfabrics
29	Louisa Owen Sonstroem 23 May 2022	Storrs, Connecticut, US	The multitude benefits in sewing your clothes by hand https://youtu.be/e5Lf2200aqk	Practitioner/business @louisaowensontroem
30	Amy DuFault 26 May 2022	Cape Cod, Massachusetts US	Colour change transformations in fashion and local fibershed https://youtu.be/1CiJdm4cZ38	Practitioner/director Botanical Colour @amytropolis

31	Jessamy Kilcollins 28 May 2022	Somerville, Massachusetts	Sharing the thrill of sewing garments to fit body https://youtu.be/jp2S9HS98e4	Practitioner/business @highenergyvintage
32	Amy Lou Stein 28 May 2022	Somerville, Massachusetts	Sharing the joy of working with her hands to make things https://youtu.be/-Qwt3fWJWnA	Practitioner/business @craftworksomerville
33	Betsy Greer 29 May 2022	North Carolina, US (via zoom)	Voicing our story through making and craftivism https://youtu.be/38ora_ayOmA	Practitioner/business @craftivista
34	Virginia Johnston 29 May 2022	Cambridge, Massachusetts US	Making for empowerment and influencing social change https://youtu.be/bzhFD--Z-A0	Practitioner/business @gather_here
35	Dr Sass Brown 1 June 2022	Bethnal Green, London, UK	On systemic change and personal values https://youtu.be/Cs_sZ4Zu42o	Academic/author @clothingethics
36	Katherine Soucie 3 June 2022	Met at V&A, London, UK	MEND and reimagining textiles https://youtu.be/yQa1Q0vZfeQ	Academic/upcycling business @sansoucie
37	Barley Massey 3 June 2022	Hackney, London, UK	Low-impact lifestyle using upcycling skills and philosophy https://youtu.be/8z111y7GBbA	Practitioner/upcycling business @fabricationshackney
38	Ros Studd 5 June 2022	Aberdeen, Scotland	Providing mending resources to fill societal knowledge gap https://youtu.be/FiWdN51QSOM	Practitioner/educator @repair_what_you_we ar
39	Ellie Alavi 6 June 2022	Aberdeen, Scotland UK	On sustainable dressing, skills and intergenerational clothes https://youtu.be/QbR9Zdz8KB8	Volunteer @repair_what_you_we ar
40	Mary Morton 7 June 2022	Edinburgh, Scotland UK	Mending for climate action + reduce waste https://youtu.be/CsNOCxXlZys	Practitioner/volunteer Shrub Zero Waste Hub @mvm13 @shrubcoop
41	Sophie Burgess 7 June 2022	Edinburgh, Scotland	Being hands on with her clothes https://youtu.be/r7R_Yg9_ic8	Practitioner/architect @sjlburgess
42	Jamie Renwick 7 June 2022	Edinburgh, Scotland	Feeling Zen while mending https://youtu.be/nD4rNCz4zME	Volunteer, business graduate @shrubcoop
43	Helena Catt 7 June 2022	Edinburgh, Scotland UK	Relishing creative upcycling to create unique clothes to wear https://youtu.be/gmCOxoPjHQQ	Practitioner/volunteer @helena_catt
44	Sally Cook 9 June 2022	Leeds, UK	Researching the experiences of new home-sewing learners https://youtu.be/w1l6vsXt01c	Academic/practitioner @sallysewandso
45	Andy Ogden 9 June 2022	Manchester, UK	Quality over quantity and reviving local manufacturing https://youtu.be/s_BqE-njjal	English Fine Cottons @englishfinecottons
46	Claire Wellesley-Smith , 10 June	Shipley, UK	Thinking through making https://youtu.be/blkr-tREmVA	Educator/ practitioner @cwellesleysmith
47	Thread Republic 10 June 2022	Holly Carr and Julia Roebuck Kirklees, UK	Teaching sewing as a life skill https://youtu.be/AkpV7knSKpw	Educators/practitioners @ptk_clothing @upcyclefashion
48	Sewing Café Lancaster , 11 June 2022	Katrina Barnish Lancaster, UK	Natural colour experiments with local plants and materials https://youtu.be/tpogqGuwZG8	Volunteer/ practitioner @sewingcafelancaster

49	Sewing Café Lancaster , 11 June 2022	Victoria and Gina Frausin Lancaster, UK	Community education around sewing, sharing Sew&Sow boxes https://youtu.be/o1gOxQy5FNw	Educators/practitioners @sewingcafelancaster
50	Prof Kate Fletcher 13 June 2022	Macclesfield, UAL, Union of Concerned Researchers in Fashion	Long-time slow fashion researcher led to Earth Logic: Fashion Action Research Plan https://youtu.be/7tF-hr1L6lI	Academic/practitioner @earthlogic_plan
51	Dr Carry Somers 13 June 2022	Leek, UK	Ethics, sustainability and Fashion Revolution @fash_rev https://youtu.be/yfUDJs0tZcY	Co-founder Fashion Revolution/educator @carrysomers
52	Dr Bridget Harvey 14 June 2022	Hackney, UK	Repair-making and the 'privilege' of mending https://youtu.be/SeEd0HljhAo	Academic/practitioner @bridgetharvey
53	Betsan Corkill 15 June 2022	Bath, UK	Therapeutic knitting and wellbeing benefits of handwork https://youtu.be/Q3YGjEIUWBQ	Physiotherapist Stitchlinks.com
54	Emma Friedlander-Collins , 16 June	Brighton, UK	Learning upcycling through play and styling without buying new https://youtu.be/mqVj_wNgO4w	Educator/practitioner @steelandstitch
55	Rachel Smith 29 June 2022	London, UK	Behaviour change and buying only what you need https://youtu.be/lxnOPKnRyiA	Under\$pent educator/practitioner @cyclingrachel



Outside Graduate Roosevelt Island in May 2022 where I stayed while doing New York interviews.

Fellowship insights

This project is a call to action focused on citizens taking control of everyday choices and actions in the wardrobe and explores their motivations for being active and resourceful participants rather than passive consumers. By nature of their inclusion in my Fellowship, the 55 practitioners and teachers engaged in advocacy, academia, social enterprise and small business are contributing solutions to the known negative impacts of the mainstream fast fashion system.

In considering the ways we can regenerate agency in the wardrobe, I have drawn together various comments and perspectives based around themes. Researchers set the scene about why culture change is needed, social enterprises, small businesses, influencers and practitioners provide insights and reflect on wellbeing benefits. The social media posts shared during my two months of action research appear in Appendix 2 and these link to recorded conversations on my [youtube channel](#).

SETTING THE SCENE

Concerned researchers' perspectives

The need for transformative change in the fashion sector to reduce its contribution to the destruction of planetary systems led to the formation of [The Union of Concerned Researchers in Fashion](#) in 2018 and I met three founding members whose insights provide important framing for this Fellowship.

At Bollington in the United Kingdom, I met co-founder **Professor Kate Fletcher [50]** from the University of Arts London who said planetary limits ultimately demarcate all human activity and when we realize we can't continue living as if we have four planets when we only have one, then things will profoundly change.

Professor Fletcher coined the term slow fashion as a response to fast fashion in her 2014 book *Design Journeys: sustainable fashion and textiles*³. This work has evolved, with colleague Mathilda Tham, into *Earth Logic: Fashion Action Research Plan*⁴ that calls out as fiction the idea that sustainability can be achieved within the current economic growth logic and recommends a total rethink of fashion. When I asked Kate about the recent emergence of ultra-fast fashion brand Shein, she said: *"It is like the death throes of an injured beast. This is almost like the last moment that we'll see this type of (fashion) industry action before the sector begins to shift fundamentally to something entirely different."*

Earth Logic is a radical departure from the current and dominant economic Growth Logic paradigm and requires learning on a massive scale. The core competencies of learning and unlearning are: confidence, creativity, community and ecological literacy. A key framework for grounding this learning is permaculture, based as it is on the ethics of earth care, people care and fair share.

In the United States, I met another concerned researcher New York Parsons School of Fashion **Assoc Professor Otto von Busch [22]** who said: *"Fashion thrives on people's uncertainties and anxieties. It needs people to not feel good about themselves, to come back next season and buy new clothes otherwise they lose their market."* He said fashion consumption today is so user friendly, low cost and accessible, that we cannot even see the full potential of what *"little frictions could allow us to experience with garments, so that we, you know, we are a bit lazy, and we are compliant with the current arrangement of things."*

Many people gain agency by consuming, some from need some from indulgence. Otto said: *"A lot of people work two or three jobs and do not have much agency in their lives. What we call fast fashion*

is their way to gain a sense of agency and feel that they can get out of their work uniforms and into clothes of their own choice on Friday night and go out."

Otto's research around fashion activism, hacktivism and fashion-abilities is based on the idea that the transformation of clothing and the transformation of self are connected. Gaining skills to tinker our clothes and cultivate our own fashion-abilities, along with the courage to play and experiment with our clothes and our style, present an alternate fashion future. A future in which we have regenerated our own agency.

"Everything is just a click away and, of course, that becomes the easiest way to engage with the world. So people think why would I need to learn other skills then? And I think that this produces more alienation and traps us where we become dependent on the freedom that our money buys us, rather than the freedom of our own agency to do things ourselves."



In this photo, *above*, taken by Otto's son in Park Slope Brooklyn, Otto and I wear our transformed clothing. *"We live at a time when clothes are cheap, when buying the fabric to make a garment is more expensive than buying finished garments. We have a surplus of garments dying in the back of the wardrobe and they can be the material by which we learn and cultivate skills,"* Otto said.

If you start by darning socks, Otto said it shows you can repair other things which is not our habit because they are inexpensive and mass produced. As we start repairing, we learn commitment to socks and social relationships. They are not just used and thrown out. If we accept the mended look, that brings a sense of repair acceptance.

In New Zealand, designer and teacher **Karishma Kelsey [1]**, another founding member of The Union of Concerned Researchers in Fashion, similarly urges us to rediscover the spiritual joy in making and mending garments, and styling and reimagining what we already own. *"In that moment of creating*

or mending, you are in a moment of meditation that generates quietness and blackness. That is just joy. It just absolutely puts you into a calm state."

She said the magical part of the mending process is that anything can be everything, and anything is everything. *"The stream of possibility that comes with mending or re-creating, or recycling or upcycling is the joy of endless possibility."*

These actions are all about wearers reclaiming and regenerating their own capabilities over what they wear, rather than outsourcing it to fashion arbiters with vested interests.

Consumer culture needs shifting

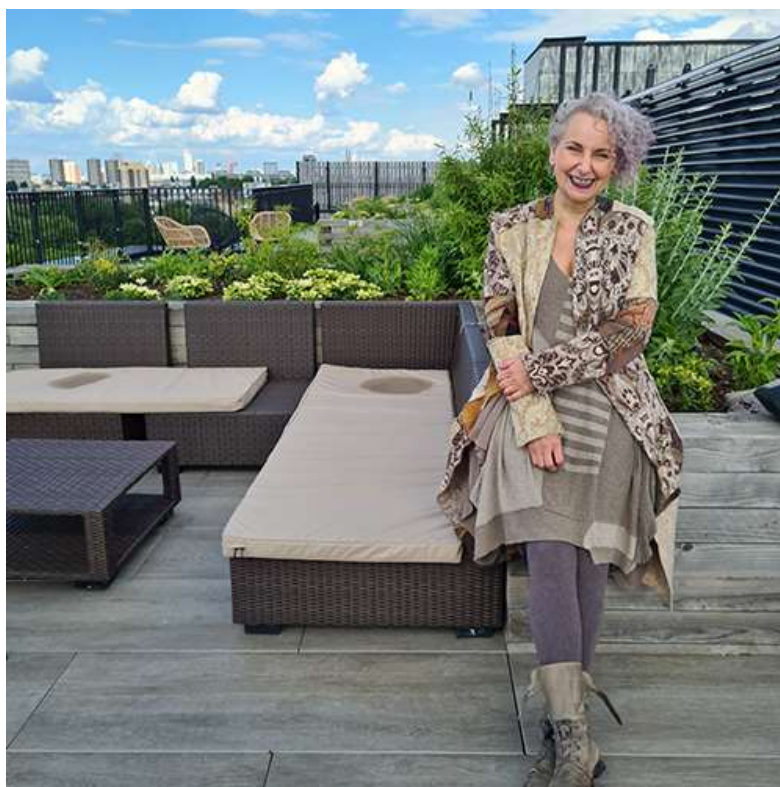
Living resourcefully is at the heart of the advocacy work of London-based **Rachel Smith [55]**, *right*, which she applies in her professional infrastructure planning career and personal life. After a life-changing year in 2014 when she didn't buy anything new or secondhand, she has tamed her consumer instincts by pausing 90 days before purchasing.

"Consumerism is a psychological operation. From when we're born, we're bombarded with advertisements and marketing. We've been brainwashed and manipulated and conditioned all our lives to shop," Rachel said.



London-based fashion academic **Dr Sass Brown [35]**, *below*, author of *Eco Fashion* and *Refashioned* said we need a culture shift away from consumption to redefine our values and how success is measured.

"We've been in a culture in the West where consumerism and how much stuff you own, and the value of that stuff, and whether that stuff is the latest model, the highest fashion, the most prestigious brand, has become a huge problem we have to address."



"This is a complicated, multi-layered problem that we have with fashion and the interconnected processes textiles and garments go through. So there is no Nirvana, there's no perfect solution. There are however lots of ways of doing better and doing more."

Sass is influencing the next generation through a new master's program for Kingston University London on sustainable fashion, business and practices that focuses on systemic change as opposed to producing new product.

PhD candidate **Katherine Soucie [36]** is researching material activism and redesign using waste as the resource after building a successful upcycling business around waste hosiery – despite being told as an undergraduate that she ‘couldn’t work with second-hand clothing’.

Katherine, *photo right with Jane in another #adventuresofthereddress*, said fashion historically was about telling people what to wear by controlling the narrative through an illusion of status from wearing certain brands.

“Now with climate change concerns there are shifts happening amongst people who feel confident and resourceful in their own skin and have a sense of self that enables them to learn to play and experiment for themselves,” Katherine said.

“The pandemic opened craft engagement and DIY culture as a way to reclaim agency and investigate self-expression through clothing, and I think there is more to unfold in this arena.”

Clothes designed to go out of style and consumers trained to buy, toss and have new ones arrive at the door next day makes no sense. It is arguably ridiculous in the current climate.



The fashion industry is totally a scam, said **Cal Patch [25]**, *below*, from upstate New York, who studied and worked in fashion before discovering her superpower was helping people become independent of it.

“I feel like the fashion industry invented that very evil concept of planned obsolescence (planning for a limited lifespan) and no one holds them accountable for it. That whole concept of being dictated what to wear, and then next season or next year, what you were wearing is now obsolete, and you need to get rid of it and buy new things. It makes no sense when you actually think about it. Clothing has a lifespan and it can last for decades, especially if it's well made from good materials and if you take care of it.”

Cal is now teaching people to measure their body and use basic maths to create simple patterns that can be endlessly adapted depending on fabric available, changing shape, mood and occasion. I met three of the people she taught: **Sonya Philip [5]**, **Katrina Rodabaugh [24]** and **Amy Lou Stein [32]** (see Appendix 2 for details).



It is not mathematically possible to make mass fashion brands sustainable, said New York author and academic **Kate Sekules [18]**.



"It (fast fashion) is financially motivated and purely about money. They're not making clothes, they're making money, and at the expense of millions of people. It is a shocking situation. We've researched this stuff and it's not getting any better. It's unforgiveable."

The idea of people becoming 'consumers' of fast fashion that can be easily disposed of came about with what Kate, *left*, refers to as the metastatisation of the industry late last century. Instead of being consumers, we need to think of ourselves as citizens, wearers, custodians of clothes with responsibility for them.

In an ideal world, she would get rid of the consumption model altogether. *"I know it is complicated and that sounds like a very naive statement but there are ways. It's just a multi-part proposition."* As a pioneer of the visible mending movement now doing a PhD in mending, Kate's idea is to undermine the fast fashion model by growing fun, creative options to enable personal connection to the clothes we wear.

Resourcefulness: commonsense with a dose of privilege

Many people I met on this Fellowship appreciate the empowering benefits of skills to stitch and sew, the wellbeing benefits from allocating leisure time to stitching, and the confidence to wear self-generated, visibly mended or redesigned clothes.

I grew up knowing how to sew, adapt and thrift for resources under the influence of a great grandmother of combined Ngai Tahu and Scottish heritage. My mother was a home economics teacher who wrote a textbook *Focus on Living*. We always lived resourcefully with the ethos of 'save the pennies and the pounds take care of themselves'.

I met many people on this Fellowship who adopt a resourceful approach because it is the right thing to do, not because they are financially limited. The 'making do' in earlier times was born from lack of resources and most people did it. Nowadays 'making do' is a response to excess and, ironically, it may be the privileged who are currently engaged.

In the United Kingdom, **Dr Bridget Harvey [52]** grew up in a resourceful family and evolved that upbringing into a PhD in repair-mending. Bridget identified elements of privilege associated with visible mending even though this global movement has been great for provoking conversations and developing a particular aesthetic.

Bridget said it is much easier to mend garments made from more expensive materials, like wool or pure cotton, denim or linen, and wearers need to work in roles that allow them to wear creative and visibly mended clothes.



“There can be some sensitivity around the association with poverty of wearing a lot of mended clothes, so there needs to be consideration of the feelings of the person who wears it, and the sort of social situations that these garments are presented in.”

Other aspects of privilege associated with mending are the time it takes and the haberdashery stash it may require, but Bridget, *left*, is encouraged by community projects where people are sharing skills and stashes so others do not need to purchase or store them.

Reflecting on other aspects of privilege associated with being more hands-on in the wardrobe, perhaps there is privilege in having the education and insight to appreciate the ecological benefits of wearing preloved clothes and the wisdom not to attempt to keep up with fashion trends.

Certainly in my case there is earned privilege, by dint of this Fellowship, to travel across the world and weave together these threads of personal health and wellbeing, community and planetary health. And maybe there is privilege in the freedom and commonsense to adopt a low-impact lifestyle of spend-less and need to earn-less (or spend-less, save more and be more resilient), in the way people like **Rachel Smith [55]** have done.

We all make choices and decisions. We have opportunities to evolve and change careers, clothes and life situations, we just need the insight, ability and motivation to do so.

In this Fellowship, the motivations I investigated include the desire to reduce textile waste and enhance wellbeing.

1 REDUCING TEXTILE WASTE through more wardrobe satisfaction

Ways in which the people I met are reducing textile waste include:

- 1.1 restyling and wearing what is already in the wardrobe
- 1.2 thrifting, mending and dyeing existing clothes
- 1.3 redesigning, co-designing using existing clothing and materials
- 1.4 making their own clothes, some hand-stitching to further slow the process
- 1.5 liberating and sharing dormant and waste textile resources within local supply chains
- 1.6 skill and knowledge sharing within communities
- 1.7 supporting local, regenerative natural fibre and design systems

1.1 Restyling and wearing what is already in the wardrobe

Creating new looks by restyling clothes and accessories you already own is the easiest way to be engaged in your wardrobe without needing to buy more.

Designer **Karishma Kelsey [1]**, *right*, grew up believing anything can be everything, and anything is everything. She enjoyed restyling my denim pinny and explained her creative approach. *“Imagine you are standing in front of your wardrobe, and from that narrative of endless possibility of creative expression you intuitively pick pieces such as an orange blouse, a denim pair of shorts and some checked leggings. That’s you being creative in that moment.*

“That is how creative expression and the concept of anything is everything translates into style. Style is an expression of your intuition of your authentic self, your true self, your spiritual innate being. You follow that intuition in the front of your wardrobe and play. What I call the Miraculous Me Movement is just magical playfulness. You are not thinking about what marketing trends dictate, you are just picking what appeals to you in that moment. The more creative you are, the more conscious you become.

“We are urging people to experiment and experience creativity because when you are playing, you are growing. And when you are growing, you are becoming more conscious. And when you are more conscious, you’re creating connection to self. And from self, it becomes interconnection to life and to Earth. And from that space of interconnection, in the playful joy of your life, you don’t actually want to damage something that’s close to you.

“Something happens in your brain. The more playful you are, the more creative you are, the more conscious you become and the less addicted you are to needing a new thing. Breaking that addiction of needing a new thing means you start to curate with what you have. What actually happens is that when you create, the happy hormones serotonin and dopamine are released, these are the same hormones that you get from shopping. The difference is that because it’s creative, there’s a consciousness and an awareness that is longer lasting.”

While many are still addicted to shopping, Karishma believes there is a growing movement of people who are saying they’re done with it. *“I’m finding more students, more young people are navigating this terrain yet they don’t quite understand it. People are wanting to know what happens if they don’t follow the trend. Why is it that my body is supposed to be skinnier? Especially if I’m a different nationality? So there’s more of this conversation happening now than a decade ago, and yes, we’ve got a long way to go.”*

Tapping into their own individual and independent style enables citizens to disconnect from consumption cycles and trends. Unsubscribing from marketing designed to create within us a sense of insecurity and lack fosters sustainability as a mindset not a new ‘sustainable’ product.

The movement to outfit repeating and re-wearing what is already in your wardrobe is another easy way to reduce the impact of clothes and counter the concept of a new dress being needed for every occasion. Simple garments made from quality materials can be worn for decades and price per wear



is a valuable consideration which fast fashion disrupts. My denim pinny appears often in this report and must have had over 200 outings since I made it in 2015 as an upcycling statement, while the red silk dress I made in 2019 from dormant garments has been documented using the hashtag #adventuresofthereddress on Instagram with more than 46 wears to date.

1.2 Thrifting, mending and dyeing existing clothes

The most sustainable way to dress is to wear clothes that already exist and keep wearing them until they're worn out. Secondhand clothes are organic because they don't add production stress or chemicals to the environment. The stigma around secondhand clothes has abated in the past decade as young and older people find thrifting an easy, affordable and engaging alternative to fast fashion.

Jessamy Kilcollins [31] in Massachusetts, *right*, has a library of clothes at her fingertips as co-owner of High Energy Vintage where she gathers, curates and mends when needed. Jessamy finds younger generations are feeling eco-anxiety and are in tune with the idea of secondhand shopping being better for the planet than buying new things. *"Being interesting and taking risks with your clothing is more acceptable than it used to be, and younger people are using trends to suit themselves. Our grandparents' generation used what was there before buying new and it is good to see more young college kids now getting into thrifting."*



Massachusetts sculptor and textile artist **Breche Honeycutt [26]** thrifts or makes all her own clothes, knits wool socks, mends jeans, eco dyes, overprints and redyes. She wants to wear real fibres not plastic ones and clothes that work with her body shape and feel good. *"Thrifting is a way of*



affording things I couldn't buy otherwise, and it is sustainable because the things are already in existence. I want quality fibres because the feel of the fabric matters."

In Scotland, **Sophie Burgess [41]**, *left* with volunteer sewing teacher Mary Morton, said she took a pledge to stop buying new clothes about four years ago and now enjoys the creativity that springs from charity shopping and adapting what she finds. This is motivated by concern about climate change and lowering her consumption, and she finds the limitations bring creative rewards.

"I am finding my own style. I like having different styles every day and being able to mix it up and enjoying vintage clothes as well," Sophie said. She is pleased to now be independent in what she wears, considering the insecurities that buying into fast fashion trends often causes.

In New Zealand, **Melissa Pentecost-Spargo [2]** is motivated by a desire to reduce waste and puts a new twist on old traditions as she explores gentle ways to bring fresh life to vintage textiles. She

adds colour and character from nature which connects them to place and makes pieces more meaningful.

Katrina Barnish [48], right, from Sewing Café Lancaster was inspired by Australian author of *Eco Colour* and *Second Skin* India Flint to look more closely at natural ways to colour and print on new and reclaimed cloth. During lockdown, Katrina made an awesome knitted jumper from local wool dyed in four different shades of colour from brambles gathered along the Lancaster canal. The garment she wears underneath once was bedsheets which Katrina dyed with coreopsis and dipped in iron, while the bodice is eco printed with coreopsis flowers. She said natural dyeing and using plant pigments to upcycle clothes and textile resources is a great technique for covering stains or creating completely fresh looks.



Clothing more interesting with age, said **Keri Ponce [8]** from Potter Valley, north-west of San Francisco. When the time comes for the first mend, she thinks *“oh it is just about to get good”*. She enjoys self-sufficiency, being resourceful and capable. *“I like the challenge, to look at old stuff and see what I can reuse. I want things a certain way and don’t see them available so I make them.”*

Kate Sekules [18], New York-based author of *Mend! A refashioning manual and manifesto* said: *“Once anyone has picked up a needle and done a little mend, they get hooked. There’s something about the sewing circle and circular movement of needle while mending. They just need to get over the first hurdle and learn how to use it.”*

Domestic mending starts conversations and enables change at the grassroots. It also encourages bigger brands to start, or continue, repair systems. Technology has arrived for those who want to outsource their mending with the new [Sojo app](#) connecting UK-based clients with menders.

Sourcing clothes from charity shops is a good way to experiment with colours, shapes and styles, with rejects easily donated back for resale. However, while thrifting and buying secondhand first has many merits, it is being fed by the fast fashion system too and therefore not entirely guilt-free.

1.3 Redesigning, co-designing using existing clothing and materials

The next step up from thrifting and refreshing clothes is becoming actively involved in chopping and changing garments to suit your own aesthetic.

Kate Sekules [18] intervenes in her entire wardrobe at all times in what she calls a co-design process. She prefers clothes that have been ‘operated on’, finds their traces of wear and memory interesting, and feels a sense of responsibility and stewardship for them.

Emi Stearn [20] learned to sew from her Gran before fashion design study and now works at FABSCRAP in New York. She loves making with upcycled resources because they enable creative self-expression through clothes that do not conform to what industry says is trendy. She says trends are often arbitrary and comedic, when you see all the waste they produce.

Katrina Rodabaugh [24] said redesigning second-hand clothing is the magic part of her wardrobe where she takes clothes that already exist and envisages how to reshape them to suit her aesthetic. What began as a *Make Thrift Mend* project in 2013 has become a book and a way of life for Katrina, and I was fortunate to spend a workshop day with her as part of my Fellowship, *photo below*.



Katrina finds it satisfying to reclaim garments by inserting herself into the design process. While she still makes some new garments, the bulk of her wardrobe is factory-made secondhand clothes that she redesigns, cuts up, mends and dyes, patches and stitches.

“When you are enhancing or prolonging the life of a garment by patching or mending, the garment will stay with you for longer because you are invested in it,” Katrina said. It is quiet work that is forgiving of interruption and returns a sense of ease. It also goes to the heart of how we understand and define value. It helps us appreciate the lifecycle of garments, how they come into our life and how they leave. And in turn this deepens our connection to the other cycles of life, including the essentials of food and water.

In Scotland, **Helena Catt [43]** delights in the creative problem-solving and variety that is possible by using craft skills to adapt clothes to suit herself. Her approach is to alter clothes without using

patterns and engaging creative craft techniques to change collars, or cut and knit on to the garments. *“When I get bored with my clothes, I go into the box of those I’m not wearing, choose something and work out how to alter it. That way I get new things without buying things... I like the problem-solving and bricolage components of altering. With visible mending, you choose from what you have got rather than matching a colour. I use charity shops as a material source and my stash as a wardrobe. I use what I have and like that I can do it, to make it yours and how you like it. That way you are not looking like everyone else, while being creative and having WOW moments.”*

A lifetime of learning by playing with materials has led PhD candidate **Emma Friedlander-Collins [54]**, right, to share remaking ideas using creative skills to sustainably interact through innovative manipulation of clothes in our wardrobes.

“It is a way of changing and altering garments by interacting with them, and then opening up to a wider conversation about other ways we can use the clothes we’ve already got.”

Emma has learned techniques such as crochet hacking through trial and error and said: *“It makes me feel good to have a sense of agency over what I’m wearing or what’s available to me.”*

Emma uses remaking with her fashion communication students and says *“what’s amazing is seeing the*



students have this epiphany moment. They’re so used to buying stuff for nothing and getting rid of it, and we’re saying no you’re not allowed to do that here. They have to get really conceptual and engaged with the garments that are available.”

“My research is about how we carry on empowering people. If we know how to interact with our garments, if we feel confident enough to start interacting with them then we can remake our look and get the same feeling that we get from buying a new top without having to buy a new top. We’ve got enough stuff in our lives already, we just need to start to interact with those materials. It’s not complicated, that’s the joyous thing, it is what we’ve been doing for generations.”

“We need lots of different life skills for us to feel confident working with what we’ve got. We need to become generalists again, rather than specialists.”

1.4 Making their own clothes, and hand-stitching to further slow the process

Stitching and sewing are life skills that enable us to be resourceful, yet they are sometimes overlooked and often diminished in contemporary and technologically-driven families, schools and education systems.

In Connecticut, **Louisa Owen Sonstroem [29]**, *right with Jane*, bubbles with the excitement, joy and knowledge of planning, making and wearing modern original clothes that she sews by hand, and loves sharing this experience with others through her self-published book *Hand Sewing Clothing: a guide*. Louisa said the fashion industry is making a mess of the planet and exploiting people in doing so, but even when you make your own garments there is still a need to be strategic about the resources and processes used.

“For me, hand-sewing feels comfortable because I am making clothes slowly, accumulating them slowly and thinking about the materials I am choosing. I sew with natural fibres, and used fabric when possible, trying to be careful with the fit so what I make will be worn, repaired and have a long life.”



Virginia Johnson [34] runs a yarn and fabric store Gather Here in Cambridge, Massachusetts with dedicated classroom spaces and machines and finds sewing basics is the most popular class which is offered every week. Another popular class is basic alterations of clothes from deep in people's closets or local thrift stores and turning them into something they want to wear. *“We talk about what drew you to the garment? Was it the fabric or the style? What is it about it that you're not wearing it now? How can we give it new life? “It's a fascinating process because people then really have to think about their consumption. And when you learn to sew, you infuse value into the thing that you've made.”*

Cal Patch [25] helps people use their own body measurements to make simple patterns and clothes that uniquely suit themselves. She said many want an alternative to store-bought clothes but they don't know how to go about it. *“In teaching people to sew, I found the pattern is the biggest obstacle so I developed a way to plot your own measurements and develop your own pattern.”*

San Francisco's **Sonya Philip [5]** was one of the people empowered by Cal. Sonya found herself in a clothing desert unable to find clothes she liked that worked with her body shape and this drove her to solve the problem by learning to make and design her own.

“From a sustainability perspective, I use less, shop less, and am more motivated to take care of clothes to ensure they wear well and last long.”

Through her book *The Act of Sewing*, Sonya helps others develop their individual and independent style. If people find making clothes intimidating or they don't know where to start, Sonya suggests: find something you love wearing and figure out the colour, fabric and shape you love, then work out how to make it. Start simple and grow your skills.

Jessamy Kilcollins [31] said there's a growing appetite for learning the skills of sewing because people are realising these are empowering skills. *"I am busty and found shopping always makes you feel bad about yourself. We're expected to fit into homogenised shapes which seems counter-intuitive. We blame our bodies for not fitting into ready-to-wear clothes but when you make for yourself, you can tailor clothes to make you feel good. All my busty friends sew."*

1.5 Liberating and sharing dormant and waste textile resources within local supply chains

Fashion is an artificial construct. In today's society, consumers are actively encouraged to accumulate resources as celebrities promote their acquisitions and contrive desire through marketing which has many negative consequences.

"I don't think people realise how much pressure it is to have too much stuff", said **Keri Ponce [8]** of the pressure to both get the money to buy it and then the baggage of carrying it through life.

In Sunnyvale California, **Bron McInerney [12]** volunteers at landfill diversion organisation FabMo and sees accumulation issues that lead to donation conversations along these lines: *"Great Aunt Ethel has died and we've got her stuff, will you take it?"* She said it is amazing the things one person can accumulate in their life: *"That has cured me of hoarding things. It's a real eye opener, to see what people can gather. Everybody should stop accumulating right now and think about what they're doing."*

Liberating and sharing materials hoarded across households and generations is the business model for Swanson's Fabrics in Montague, Massachusetts, where **Kathryn Greenwood Swanson [28]** has created a shop that enables fabric stashes to find their way from attics into the sunlight of new life.

Kathryn said Swanson's Fabrics is not just a reuse fabric store, it is an affordable way to get people sewing again so they can enjoy self-sufficiency gains through skills and making cool things to wear. *"My store is a win, win, win for everyone involved. It is a win for people who are donating and wanting to pass good stuff on to the next generation; a win for people who can buy affordably and a win for the environment."*

Kathryn is operating in the gift economy, with an abundance not scarcity model, because she wants people to feel the empowerment that comes from making their own clothes that work with their size, proportions and gender expression.

In Massachusetts, **Crispina French [27]** is a master upcycler who has used textile waste as raw material for more than three decades and now mentors others on how to build well-paid, sustainable textile waste businesses through her membership community Stitcherhood. *"I'm turning waste into money. There's no negativity in what I do, it is all benefiting people and the planet, and there's the opportunity to grow that through the Stitcherhood to serve and nurture others who are using waste materials too."*

Designer **Katherine Soucie [36]** creates beautiful garments from waste hosiery and doing postgraduate study around her MENDING systems approach (Method, Evaluate, Navigate and Design) for redesigning in a sustainable world using waste as the resource.

"When we think about localism and bringing agency to materials that already exist, which is at the heart of what I do, I believe we need to be working with existing materials rather than manufacturing new materials. It's about resource preservation and craft preservation."

In London, **Barley Massey [37]** runs Fabrications Hackney as a shop and studio practice based on upcycling as a way to utilise surplus clothing and textiles, share skills and spark conversations about creative reuse of existing textiles. *"Twenty-two years on, our aim is still to inspire a joy of making"*

while encouraging thoughtful and resourceful ways of living in a welcoming and creative environment.”

William Barros [6] takes pride in sewing using rescued materials and has pride in his work at SCRAP (an acronym for Scrounger Centre for Reusable Art Parts) to keep textiles out of landfill and provide affordable access to materials for San Francisco creatives. William reckons there should be a SCRAP in every major city, because it is a win-win helping donors and customers keep resources circulating in cost-effective and sustainable ways. His colleague **Jake Lindsay [7]** reckons the easiest way to reduce waste is to turn the tap off on disposables.

Bea Lorimer [3], *below*, started a creative business at Waiheke Island in New Zealand based on



upcycling natural-fibre clothes others are throwing away because she felt compelled to do something to stop it becoming landfill.

Bea believes in doing the right thing for the environment, motivating others to look at clothing differently, seeing value in waste and appreciating colour. She said starting with simple projects that don't require sewing skills, like scissors on t-shirts, can inspire people to learn what they need to do more.

1.6 Skill and knowledge sharing within communities

Knowledge about caring for clothes used to be passed down through families or taught in schools, but we lost our way as consumer culture and endless variety became available through globalisation. I found many people recognising that diminished skills and agency amongst the citizenry meant they were unable to engineer their own clothing solutions.

In the United Kingdom, **Sally Cooke [44]** is a lifelong sewist and now PhD researcher studying the experiences of people who are learning to sew clothes for themselves. The context for the work is fashion sustainability and the ethical and environmental drivers for re-thinking relationships with clothes. *“Knowing what we now know about the environmental impact of the fashion industry, I am more aware than ever that being able to sew gives me choice.”*

Sally said the online craft revival, the indie sewing pattern revolution and programs like the *Great British Sewing Bee* mean there is enormous interest in home sewing at the moment. *“I am interested in what the experiences of amateur sewists can tell us that is useful in re-thinking clothing sustainability issues and perhaps reframing sewing skills as sustain-abilities – abilities that enable us to behave more sustainably.”*

“I am increasingly convinced, thanks to the work of people like Kate Fletcher and my supervisor Amy Twigger Holroyd that the answer to the fashion sustainability problem does not reside within the current fashion model. This is all the more reason to look elsewhere, including amateur and past practices, for creative inspiration and a more grounded critical response.”

Sewing is an essential life skill, say the entrepreneurial young women **Holly Carr [47]**, *below left*, and **Julia Roebuck [47]**, *below right*, from Thread Republic in Kirklees UK who are bridging the gap in opportunities to learn, experiment and play through sewing. They believe wellbeing benefits from enjoyment of the process itself surpass the sense of achievement it offers along with creativity, sustainability and community. *“We think it’s really important to nurture that sense of wellbeing from sewing and for young people to have the feeling of doing something for the joy of it, rather than some desired outcome.”*



The Thread Republic team are listening to what people want from engagement with textiles and clothing and finding an overwhelming cry for provision of the wellbeing aspects, to enhance people's self-esteem and

their confidence in trying something artistic if they don't think of themselves as naturally artistic. They are providing easy entry points into sewing, and encouraging people to give it a go and creating a non-judgemental space for them to experiment without feeling like there's a right or wrong way of doing something. Julia Roebuck said she is drawn to reducing waste and upcycling is a way of keeping textiles going for as long as possible. The focus of her Upcycle Fashion business is not on producing upcycled product but rather on providing a teaching service enabling others to upcycle their own clothing and adopt circular clothing practices.

Fashion Revolution Week was formed after the Rana Plaza Factory collapse and works across citizens' education and awareness raising, with policy makers, and undertakes ground-breaking research such as its fashion transparency index and emissions.

Co-founder of the movement **Dr Carry Somers [51]**, *right*, is raising awareness about the impacts of the textile industry by carrying out citizen science and social science investigations in conjunction with local universities in the United Kingdom.



She is currently looking at mud pollution in lake sediments from historic textile production as well as microfibres present in the water today that is shedding from clothes being washed. *“The researchers washed and dried just eight lab coats, these were polyester cotton blends, and they got five milliliters of microfibres off them in just one wash and dry cycle. It is really interesting to see people engaging because once you start to see the problem, you understand, and once you start to understand, you can do something about it.”*

Carry said 15,000 different chemicals are used to make textiles and clothing, but few are disclosed. *“We can ask brands what's in my clothes, and we can demand regulation from policymakers because publishing your manufacturing-restricted substances list should be required by law. So we know what chemicals are going into our waterways and into our seas, affecting human health affecting our endocrine system and affecting our fertility. We know a lot of this is due to chemicals and a lot of these chemicals are found in our clothing.”*

Knowing how to care for clothing and having skills to mend them saves money and reduces landfill said **Ros Studd [38]** from [Repair What You Wear](#) based in Aberdeen, Scotland. Ros said knowledge of five simple techniques enables people to fix 75 percent of problems that arise in the wardrobe and she set up this online platform, with support from **Ellie Alavi [39]**, photo below left with Ros, motivated by a desire to fill the intergenerational gap in core mending skills across society.

“We have made these resources free because in the past you learned these things for free and we want to contribute to society by perpetuating skills and knowledge about wearing and caring for



clothes in an environmentally sustainable way,” Ros said.

She said life skills' material around clothing care can slot into the curriculum of skills for work and future careers programs because it cuts across sustainability, budgeting, fibre science, social enterprise, business development, waste management and more.

“Knowledge is empowering and feeling confident about decision-making in your wardrobe gives you a feeling of being more in control of your life which is good for mental health. And obviously you can get pleasure and relaxation out of the process of mending itself,” said Ros.

In London, **Barley Massey [37]** shares skills and knowledge by working with lots of different community groups, educational organizations, galleries, festivals, and the Love Your Clothes campaign. *“Before COVID, I went around most of the London boroughs teaching sewing skills because they had identified that a lot of people not having the opportunity to learn even basic skills such as sewing on a button or fixing a hem was one of the causes for a lot of our clothing waste.”*

Claire Wellesley-Smith [46] does a lot of work in community settings because she is passionate about providing opportunities for people to be engaged and share skills together. She believes

sewing skills give you agency over your own stuff, which can be a powerful thing. Her books, *Slow Stitch* and *Resilient Stitch*, are based around the stitching process which Claire absorbed almost by osmosis from her mother and grandmother who sewed for practical purposes.

In Edinburgh, I visited the Shrub Zero Waste Hub where volunteers such as **Helena Catt [43]** share mending and upcycling skills to the next generation. **Jamie Renwick [42]**, right with *Helena*, said he felt a bit of Zen when learning to mend his jeans and is pleased to have the skills to mend more in future. He started thrifting as a university student for the style choices it offers but now does it to reduce the impact of his clothing.



Sew&Sow boxes are a community project developed by Sewing Café Lancaster which has built these little street boxes that share haberdashery and gardening stuff in the same way that street libraries share books. There are similar Little Free Craft Library boxes run by Gather Here in Massachusetts and Julia Roebuck of Upcycle Fashion in Kirklees, UK.

1.7 Supporting local, regenerative natural fibre and design systems

Dressing is an agricultural act, if we want to wear natural fibres like linen, cotton and wool rather than plastic ones like polyester and nylon derived from fossil fuels. A shift to more local regenerative textile systems is a way to reduce their ecological impact. In the United States, I had the opportunity to visit Fibershed Northern California and Fibershed South East New England in Massachusetts.

Through the Fibershed Learning Center in San Geronimo, founder **Rebecca Burgess [11]**, right, makes the soil to soil connection in the production, use and regeneration of natural fibres. This movement is shining light on ways of transforming fibre and dye systems from the ground up and engaging everyone involved in the complex process of bringing



clothes into the world. It is a vision for place-based textile sovereignty and Rebecca believes what is needed is the will and courage to appropriately resource and financially invest in them so they can function to farm, ranch, mill, sew, repair and cycle materials into new clothes and eventually into compost. Rebecca's book *Fibershed: growing a movement of farmers, fashion activists, and makers for a new textile economy* is an invitation to engage with all parts of the growing, creating, wearing and caring processes of our clothing. Within the Northern California Fibershed, **Craig Wilkinson [10]**

is farming *Persicaria tinctoria* plants, sharing seedlings and knowledge about growing and using indigo for natural colour.

From Cape Cod, **Amy DuFault [30]**, *right*, runs the South East New England Fibershed and recently published *A Toolkit for Fibersheds and Brands: creating a conversation for a new era of design*.

Amy's goal is to reconnect the local growing of regenerative fibres through to milling and making the clothes we wear. *"There's still such a disconnection about where things come from because in the city there's distance from nature itself. They try to use technology to make amends to the planet, to recycle plastic, but that's not the solution. The solution is working with the soil, working with the farmers, keeping farmers on the land so we can have fiber that's made from plants or animals."*

Having worked as a sustainable fashion advocate for decades, Amy said there's a lot of talk but still not much action. She believes certifications should be paid by brands not farmers. *"Farmers are not going to do any of the stuff that brands want them to do without money behind it. They're tired of putting themselves out there for the brands and the brands don't put themselves out there at all."*

As *Earth Logic* makes clear, the new learning, skills and mindsets for fashion required in the 21st century are grounded in the permaculture ethics of earth care, people care and fair share.

Permaculture has provided a local and regenerative model for change since it was developed 50 years ago by Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in response to concerns about the ecological impact of industrial agricultural systems. It is a design system with 12 guiding principles that can be applied across farms, communities, properties, homes, kitchens and wardrobes (see Appendix 5). The principles most relevant to the wardrobe are: observe and interact; apply self-regulation; produce no waste; use small and slow solutions; use and value renewable resources and services; use and value diversity; use edges and value the marginal; creatively use and respond to change. See Appendix 3 for the Permaculture in your Wardrobe model I refined on this Fellowship.

In the United Kingdom, I had an opportunity to visit British Fine Cottons where **Andy Ogden [45]** is reviving cotton spinning in Manchester and buying the cotton fibre direct from just two farming families, one in California and the other being Australian Super Cotton from St George, Queensland, Australia. At this time when globalisation and a lack of transparency continues to drive down clothing prices through exploitation of people and resources, Andy is focused on quality, sustainability, provenance and ethics. He believes common sense and traditional values that are honest and responsible are the future of textiles.



Andy, right, said UK research found the percentage of take-home pay the average household spends on apparel and clothing hadn't changed in 20 years, but the amount of goods that money buys has increased four-fold.



"We're buying four times the amount of rubbish for the

same money." We can only wear one pair of trousers at a time and Andy believes we need to change buying habits to buy less of higher quality which will last longer and be something of which to be proud. Buy a higher quality product that gives you 200 wears (the global average is only four wears) because you look after it. *"That's when you start to be able to put money into the entire supply chain, to pay people properly, to automate and invest in the environment and in society."*

2 ENHANCING WELLBEING through more wardrobe engagement

This study emerged from my experience of wellbeing benefits that come from being more engaged with our clothes. There is no single measure of wellbeing, according to the [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#) but individual wellbeing can be measured using people's subjective evaluation of themselves, based on their feelings, and is associated with notions of happiness and life satisfaction. Almost everyone I spoke with during my Fellowship travels mentioned the personal wellbeing benefits of tinkering in their wardrobes.

The wellbeing benefits of these hands-on upcycling actions include:

- 2.1 a sense of empowerment and agency over what they wear
- 2.2 a sense of playfulness, joy and self-expression in having interesting clothes
- 2.3 feelings of calm, relaxation, self-soothing, distraction, resilience and meditation
- 2.4 comfort from slowing down, thinking through making, and being resourceful
- 2.5 a felt sense of meaning and mindful connection to self, clothes and community
- 2.6 a sense of contributing to broader solutions for fashion waste
- 2.7 feelings of interconnection to nature and the natural world

2.1 A sense of empowerment and agency over what they wear

Sonya Philip [5], is a woman with real-life individual and independent style who believes in the many benefits of being an active participant in the creation of your own wardrobe. Being unable to find clothes she liked that worked with her body shape drove Sonya to solve the problem by learning to make and design fun clothes she loves to wear. This led to a book *The Act of Sewing* in which she wrote: *"Taking a flat piece of fabric and transforming it into a garment through the simple acts of cutting and stitching has a certain alchemy... As makers, we get to create what we want, instead of relying on the ever-changing tastes of fashion designers, retailers and trendsetters."*



Sonya, above, said: *"Making is empowering, it enabled me to create my own personal style, and enjoy clothes that are not available ready-to-wear. Making engenders appreciation, helps interrupt consumption cycles and offers an alternative."*



Chef and herbalist **Katie Ring [9]**, photo left with Jane, has a desire to bring clothing options more into her own hands because she feels limited by the clothes she can buy and drained by the shopping experience. Dyeing, thrifting, mending jeans are hands-on actions she is already taking.

"It feels empowering to be more involved. I can do something. The desire to do more is there... I want to express myself more authentically through clothes. I want depth in the story of my garments. I want a feeling of pride and ownership for what I put on my body, the materials I am engaging with, and have respect and appreciation for the history, colour and meaning of my clothes."

Betsy Greer [33] actually jumped for joy when she recently made her very first dress. *“It was exciting and empowering... the fact that you can choose to make something in a color that you want, in a pattern that you want, is empowering, because you're showing up fully as who you are, versus putting on the clothes that someone else decided was worthy of sale.”*

In Connecticut, **Louisa Owen Sonstroem [29]** said it is really empowering to be able to take raw materials and turn them into something you can live in. *“I love showing people how to make directly for themselves. You are not limited to the shapes, sizes, colours and fabrics prescribed to you in stores and that, again, is empowering. You are not playing a passive part in dressing, but making all the choices and knowing how to realise them into clothes.”*

Louisa said sewing by hand slows down the making process in radical ways. Apart from being exciting, stimulating, satisfying and fulfilling, it is slow and portable, affordable, independent from electricity and machine problems, easier to control the material and have precision, and provides you with agency and ownership of the creative process.

2.2 Sense of playfulness, joy and self-expression in having interesting clothes

Play is the highest form of research, said Albert Einstein. Giving ourselves permission to play is fun and liberating in a world where the pursuit of perfection is glorified. When you take a risk, go off script, do something different to what others are doing, it is freeing.

Amy Lou Stein [32], *right*, said that she makes things all the time because it brings her joy. She's the person who doesn't leave home without a project to work with her hands.

“I really love when I find an article of clothing that I can make better. There is a lot of white or beige or pale-coloured clothes in the thrift stores and you can wear it like it is, or repurpose and reuse it, mend the hole in it or throw it in the compost.”
“I really love clothes, new, old, used, expensive or cheap, I love them. I do not necessarily love fashion, but I really love things that my friends have made or patterns that my friends have made, that brings me a little bit more joy.”



In New York City where she works at FABSCRAP, **Dhamar Romo Chavez [19]** says almost all her clothing comes from the Reuse Room where fully constructed garments are on-sold. She loves to dress well to express her individuality and personality by creating her own clothes. She interacts with her clothes, thrifts and fixes them, adding patches or dyeing them so they look a bit different.

“I think there's a lot of fun in that. We like to upgrade our closet every now and then, and that's totally fine. But we already have all the materials needed. And being able to express yourself in a way that isn't harming other people on the planet is super important. So I do find it meaningful to be able to express myself in a way that I think is also continuing to have clothing in circulation. There's also a lot of pride and happiness in seeing something that didn't exist before but now it does. And it's

exactly what you thought it was going to be or it actually looks completely different than what you thought it was going to be. Both are really fun experiences.”



Also in New York, the motivations of **Emi Stearn [20]**, *left*, for being hands-on with her clothes include self-expression, self-sufficiency, creative problem-solving and fun. *“I feel more myself if I make my own clothes and am genuinely expressing and showing the real me. The benefit of being able to rescue and recycle resources is an extra plus but not the main motivation.”* Mending and upcycling are helpful for her emotional wellbeing as a way to counter insecurity and self-doubt. *“Creating brings me serotonin when I finish a project and that helps.”*

At the University of Brighton, **Emma Friedlander-Collins [54]** is influencing the next generation to use creative

skills and innovative material manipulation of existing clothes. *“If we feel confident enough to start interacting with our garments then we can remake our look and get the same feeling that we get from buying a new top without having to buy a new top.”*

It's not complicated and that's the joyous thing Emma said. It is actually what people have been doing for generations and citizens have just lost their way in the past few decades in pursuit of the quick fix enabled by technology and greed-charged consumerism.

2.3 Feelings of calm, relaxation, self-soothing, distraction, resilience and meditation

Betsy Greer [33] linked craft and activism into craftivism two decades ago and in so doing recognized it as a way of connecting to self and others, finding voice, feeling joy, and telling your story. She discovered a global community of people, in the past and present, with stories about using craft as a way to process heavy feelings and speak out which informed her 2014 book *Craftivism: the art and craft of activism*. *“Craftivism for me over time has morphed into a way of showing up for yourself and telling your full story of who you are, or where you want to go or hope to go. It is using craft as a vehicle for transformation of yourself.”* She said making helps regulate her emotions, regulate her breathing and find time for herself. *“There’s a self-care aspect to it,”* Betsy said.

Brece Honeycutt [26] said being hands-on with clothes is good for her personal wellbeing. *“Using my hands is an important part of it. My hands are never idle, always stitching and mending. When in the studio writing, reading and researching that uses brain power, and I need to get my hands in something to balance that so I have stitching projects that use a different energy from reading. Stitching is not mindless but it takes the brain to a different energy, almost meditative, quiet, slow, a deliberate stepping back for processing time.”*

Crispina French [27] said: *“Using the right side of our brains has been scientifically proven to diminish stress and anxiety, and build confidence and self-worth. Making is good for you because it*

nurtures your soul and puts you in flow. It is a sacred gift to create something from nothing, there's an alchemic process in making dinner from your vegetable garden or a dress from old sweaters."

Keri Ponce [8], *right*, said mending doesn't feel like a task it feels intentional. She values the stillness, while getting something done. It is a moment to breathe. It is meditative and soothing.

Dr Sass Brown [35] said she gains a sense of accomplishment in finding creative means of maintaining clothes she's loved as they age. *"There's definitely a meditative process to crafting, to mending and taking care of things."*

Erin Gafill [16] said: *"When I am stitching, I feel calm. When I pick up a needle and thread, it is a path for me to feel grounded and whole, and it improves my wellbeing instantaneously. When my hands are working with needle and thread, I access that connection which is a path to wellbeing for me and I love sharing that with others. There is a remembering, a coming back to ourselves and the simple things that matter."*



Erin said: *"It is more important how the work makes me feel, not the look itself. Through the process, I am invested in not just the outcome but the felt sense of wellbeing. I work as a teacher at cultural organisations such as museums and it is so much more engaging if we can hook in not from a do good, but from a FEEL good perspective... I am grateful to have that these experiences in childhood. I wish all children could cultivate the self-calming and anti-anxiety benefits of creativity and the empowering sense of capacity and autonomy that comes with these skills."*

Kathryn Swanson [28] said: *"We are built for fibre arts ...it is not that fibre arts are good therapy, it is that being separated from fibre arts is un-therapeutic... a fidget spinner (for people with ADHD) used to be a drop spindle (used to spin fibres)."*

Helena Catt [43] said: *"Creativity is important for mental wellbeing; being creative makes me feel better. I notice if I haven't done anything creative for a while."*

Virginia Johnston [34] said: *"It's so important that we find the joy in craft so that we can do the harder things ... to continue making phone calls, writing letters and having difficult conversations with people about assault weapons in the United States."*



Barley Massey [37], *above*, said that during lockdown many people took up sewing, particularly hand-sewing as a way to keep calm at a time of uncertainty, using needle and thread as a therapeutic and mindful way of slowing down. It is also a way to cultivate concentration and attention, and presence and patience, which then filters through into daily life in other ways. She says being able to use hand-sewing skills to mend your clothes not only makes them last longer, it gives people a sense of pride in feeling more connected and emotionally attached to their garments.

2.4 Comfort from slowing down, thinking through making, and being resourceful

In the rush to own things for reasons of status and looks, we lose the opportunity to be mindful and resourceful through the act of making and creating.

A lack of making is causing unwellness, according to social justice and environmental entrepreneur **Geraldine Tew [4]**, founder of creative business ReCreators which provides hands-on workshops for sustainability and wellbeing in Auckland, New Zealand.

Ger believes empowerment comes through learning a skill to make a finished item that brings a sense of achievement and accomplishment. *"It's those positive feelings that you get when you create by hand and gain a sense of design, which fundamentally has been robbed by hyper-consumerism. People have lost their skills and they've lost hobbies. We've got these quick phone pings or these quick games or this quick purchase. And actually, we know that's fundamentally leading to mental illness whereas making leads to mental wellness."*

Mindful making and upcycling is also bringing the community together with a common sense of purpose around environmental concerns. Ger said there's a direct correlation between income and consumerism and waste to landfill, hence the need to commit to degrowth if society is serious about reducing our collective environmental footprint. This will involve cutting the average 9-tonne carbon lifestyle down to 2-tonne by reducing consumerism, meat-eating, transportation and international travel.

Claire Wellesley-Smith [46], right, carves out time each day to stitch as a way of sifting through her life. She has created a map of her thinking through making which unrolls like a scroll and reveals the stories of her textile journey in Shipley, near Bradford in west Yorkshire. This stitch journal began in 2013 and records Claire's daily practice of pausing and reflecting, perhaps only for 10 minutes or much longer when there is a lot of thought-processing to be done. This stitching practice underpins her books, *Slow Stitch* and *Resilient Stitch*. Claire gains wellbeing benefit from the focused activity of stitching, when the eye is drawn to a small area of cloth and a pattern is created through a generative process. *"It's an immense privilege for me to even carve 10 minutes out of my day to stitch in a kind of meaningless fashion. I'm not making something, I'm not cutting out 50 coats a day and having to stitch them together. This is absolute privilege."*



A physiotherapy background led **Betsan Corkill [53]**, at Bath in the United Kingdom, to explore the therapeutic benefits of knitting and stitching which in medical terms acts as a 'bilateral rhythmic psychosocial intervention to manage pain'. Betsan said knitting is beneficial because of its rhythmic nature, because it requires both hands to co-ordinate, and because it applies creativity to master.

The touch and texture of the knitting influences wellbeing, as does colour but to a lesser extent. It is highly portable, meaning it is available as a self-soothing tool in all settings. If done in a group, there can be social benefits too. She said therapeutic knitting is best done in about 30 minute intervals throughout the day when you bring yourself back into that state of safety, that state of embodied presence which brings your systems back to a healing state. It offers an alternative to traditional medication-based approaches to health and wellbeing.

"Our grandmothers and great grandmothers used to gather together and talk over their knitting or mending and solve their problems. People don't do that as much these days."

2.5 A felt sense of meaning and mindful connection to self, clothes and community

When we invest our own energy in garments by mending, they visibly show that energy and love on their surface. In the process of mending our clothes, we are mending ourselves, as well as demonstrating care and repair to others.

Retail therapy is a band aid that never heals us, said **Melanie Falick [23]**, *right*, who lives in the Hudson Valley, upstate New York, and believes creative expression and making things connects us to our survival. The chapters of Melanie's book *Making a Life* reflect the meaning and connection we gain from making by hand. There's the remembering of our heritage and what it feels like to play, slowing down, joining hands through community and connection, making a home and finding a voice.



Wearing and valuing the memories in clothing passed down from her mother and grandmother is one of the ways **Ellie Alavi [39]** chooses to dress sustainably. Now living in Aberdeen, Scotland, Ellie is originally from Iran and was shocked by the culture of consumption so different to her own more practical approach.

Crispina ffrench [27], *right*, believes there is an infinity of wins in using our hands and waste textiles to make things, and connecting in this way proved vital during the pandemic. *"The creative process is important for human survival. The added benefit of making from waste materials is we are nurturing the planet at the same time. I love working for myself, making things, making something that serves the planet, something that is useful for others and helps reduce waste materials."*



People are more emotionally involved in their own presentation when they are in the driver's seat on what they look like at the end of the day, said San Francisco's Britex Fabrics manager **Dina Fayer [17]**. *"When they have their clothes made, or make them themselves, they have agency, and can wear what they do not see in stores. It is what is missing (from ready-to-wear), they never find 'me'."* Dina said people who are conscious of what they buy, make and wear are part of solution to fast fashion. They have consideration of resources and also consideration to pass on to another person because they see value in what they have made or owned. *"Heirloom sewing is still happening, when*

you made pants that you grew out of you are very happy to give them to someone you know. It is personal. So much fashion is seen as a finished product with a tag on it, and you never see the maker. When you know the maker, there is an honour in that."

Jaki Canterbury [15], below, created Slowfiber as a place to trade textiles and sewing supplies, and restitch community through workshops. *"We are hardwired for this kind of work and are sorely missing it. We need to stop thinking of it as somebody else's work, it is life-affirming work for us all."* Jaki is working to overcome the cultural road blocks which include the fear of failure, the lack of skills and the lack of priority for making things.



Erin Gafill [16] said: *"Two and a half years ago, Jaki asked me to take a pledge to not buy new clothes for six weeks. That wasn't just about not buying, it was also about reflecting on how much I already owned. This was a pivot to be connected to clothes as a source of creativity and I have been revisiting all the clothes I own and making them make sense today."*

"I feel the act of making with my hands is a path to wellbeing. We shouldn't have to be reminded of that because it

is innate. We have become removed from making – our clothes, food and entertainment... It has made me more conscious that if I choose to buy I am more thoughtful, and not shopping for entertainment or anti-anxiety. I look at fashion and am aware how much dis-ease there is from things that are being sold to us. I am choosing to be more conscious, and anything I wear now I want to have a connection to it. Thoughtfully and with intentionality, the making and mending and the wearing, investing my creative mind into something that is also very utilitarian."

Jessamy Kilcollins [31] said mending establishes connection to our garments. *"It makes sense to extend the life of garments that are already here. They are often higher quality than new clothes and more often natural fibres that are easier to mend and more comfortable to wear."*

Melissa Pentecost-Spargo [2] recalls growing up with her mother dyeing textiles in the family home using native flax, onion skins, eucalyptus leaves and bark. *"I would come home from school and she would be brewing up a big pot of eucalyptus leaves to dye wool and the whole kitchen would smell of eucalyptus... It makes me feel connected to my mum when I'm inhaling that steam from the eucalyptus leaves, it just feels like my mom's right there on my shoulder, guiding me. It makes me feel good. It makes me feel capable."*

Katrina Barnish [48] from Sewing Café Lancaster said: *"It's so much more meaningful when you're wearing something that you've spent time on. When you are using local resources for colour and pigment and know every stage of the process, and the level of thought that goes into everything you make helps it be successful."* Katrina was a special education teacher and is now applying the creativity and solution-focused approach from her teaching career in this community group working on sustainability in textiles.

In the digital age, **Virginia Johnson [34]** believes people are gravitating to making wearables with their hands so they have something tactile and tangible, and a felt sense of accomplishment.

2.6 A sense of contributing to broader solutions for fashion waste

The fast fashion industry thrives on a lack of education and knowledge about where clothing comes from and how garments are made, said UK designer **Holly Carr [47]** from Thread Republic. *“It is going to take a long time for us to communicate that to addicts of fast fashion. We're asking them to give something up, you know, their love of buying new and getting instant gratification, that quick fix of endorphins from something new and putting aside the impact that purchase has on the planet and the people that make our clothes.”*

To help create change, Holly and her colleagues are building awareness into their group sessions and chatting about clothing habits, how to interact with clothing and build stronger, longer-lasting connections to them. *“It is not about less, it's actually about more: more connection to garments, more stories, more creativity and more self-expression.”*

Mary Morton [40] spent her professional life as a pharmacist in efficient, mild-mannered service in Inverness, Scotland, but is now a committed activist after educating herself about anthropogenic climate change at the encouragement of her engineer son. Now living in Edinburgh, Mary has made significant changes to her diet and lifestyle, agitates for change including through Extinction Rebellion, and volunteers with the sewing group at Shrub Zero Waste Hub to help others reduce their impact.

Sewing Café Lancaster [49] uses creative approaches around community, education and enterprise to influence grassroots change for an ethical textile industry and regenerative textile practices. It promotes wellbeing, advocates sustainability and connects with people across the community, to share skills, to reuse, repair and reduce. I was curious about the governance of this volunteer group and have permission to publish its constitution, see Appendix 4.

The group hosts mending stations, Sew&Sow boxes (sharing haberdashery and gardening supplies), street stitching, brochures and videos, produce bag and community banner-making sessions, works with refugee groups and schools, hosts Beer and Yarn sessions, and has a natural dyes' garden.



Creative director **Victoria Frausin [49]**, left, with her sister and fellow Sewing Café Lancaster member **Gina Frausin [49]**, said over-consumption is the key issue: there are simply too many clothes in the world. *“We know for some people, the shopping experience is important. It is like a*

hobby to go to different shops and buy every week or every month and have coffee and shop some more.”

After waking up to fast fashion's social and environmental impacts, Victoria and Gina now sew, tinker and experiment with garments they already own. The sisters have replaced the shopping hobby with a different, healthier one advocating for the environment and doing clothing maintenance.

They've made a lovely group of friends through Sewing Café Lancaster that enables social connection as well as understanding more about how clothes are made and sharing that awareness with the view to changing behaviours. *"We understand it is a privilege being able to have the awareness, the time and the freedom to do what we do and achieve what we have achieved."*

Emi Stearn [20] believes a societal shift is needed in the way we think about, produce and consume goods, and a world reckoning with capitalism. Brands need to be held accountable for their waste and excess, and reduce the number of collections they produce each year because there are already enough clothes on the planet for centuries to come.

She said society has this weird collective thought that if something has a hole we get rid of it because clothes are so cheap. Emi wishes mending skills and knowledge was taught in school because we as humans need to know how things are made. *"We take it for granted because so much is at our fingertips and we can just buy it. Yet so much goes into each garment, people are disconnected and desensitized from that. If we know how clothes are made, we have more respect and less waste because we can reuse them in some way."*

Kathryn Greenwood Swanson [28] said: *"It is dehumanising to change clothes often, you forget who you are. We're making it cool to become capable, to manipulate things around you and refresh your own stuff."* Kathryn teaches skills including braided-in rug making which everyone can bond with. She has free fabric for children in her shop, because using scissors, knots and glue is a good place to start. *"We are trash rich, finding supplies is not the problem, being capable is what is missing."*



Kathryn, left, said: *"I think the more that we can understand that these objects are really difficult to make. And that it is humans who make them, those very simple truths should hopefully help a person reduce how liberal they are with allowing clothes to come in and out of their life. And I believe that you can't teach people about clothing and about fabrics and textiles without teaching them what it takes."*

"So by promoting reuse and promoting becoming capable of sewing and learning how to mend and tailor and alter, it just gives an individual a much deeper perspective on how many systems are in place and how complex they must be for a \$3 t-shirt to get to you at Walmart and how outrageously nonsensical that all is."

Betsy Greer [33] believes consumers have to bring on the changes in the fashion industry because most businesses won't. *"We are the problem, if we are buying trendy things, buying things to have multiple wardrobes."* We may be the problem but we are the solution too, through choices we make to be more responsible in our purchasing habits.

Virginia Johnson [34], below, said: *“I hope that people will pay more attention to what they're buying, and how much they need. I think it's important also to have these very honest conversations about fashion and consumption with our friends and our families. I think that it's so easy to make these decisions in isolation. But what I love about having a community at Gather Here is that we talk about the cost of consumption and what we're buying and how we wear it every single day.”*



2.7 Feelings of interconnection with nature and the natural world

Biophilia is a term to describe our innate human instinct to connect with nature and other living beings. We are part of nature and it is [known](#) that spending time in nature is good for our soul and spirit. Most people I met on this Fellowship spoke of feeling more comfortable wearing natural fibres, appreciating how they feel on their skin and allowing it to breathe. There is appreciation that natural fibres can be regenerated into the ecosystem for another cycle of life, in contrast to synthetic plastic fibres which never break down.

Karishma Kelsey [1] said awareness of the need for change in the way we dress is emerging as we are becoming more connected to Earth-based reality: *“I think it's because we are remembering, we are waking up and remembering we are all connected.”*

Otto von Busch [22] said the transformation of clothing and the transformation of self are connected. The psychology of clothing, the journeys we take with garments, the dreams and aspirations we put in them are important. Otto said there's a connection to Buddhist teaching, and how we live wisely with coming decay, aging and death. Fashion is all about the denial of that, trying to produce an illusion that it doesn't exist. We can be gentle, live wisely, accept our changing proportions and that materials age and garments die. This is life.

Bridget Harvey [52] wonders if part of our motivation for mending clothing made from natural materials, is the interconnectedness to ourselves as natural beings and being drawn to value and care for something that ages as we do.



In Massachusetts, **Brece Honeycutt [26]**, *left*, has splendid collections in her studio that connect with the natural world but since becoming aware of just how much she has created and gathered, Brece is shifting focus away from physical pieces and towards making aware through nature tours.

She said being hands-on with clothes is good for her personal wellbeing because it feels good to

be able to say I made that or let's fix that. *"People comment on the mends and they become aware that just because something has a hole, it doesn't mean you need to throw it out. Making aware is linked here to, so we are starting conversations about dye pollution and waste."*

Kate Fletcher [50] said thinking about clothing and the relationship it has with nature is a way to help us engage around the ecological context in which we live and bring joyful and deeper insights.

"It's a bit like if you walk in hills in a skirt very quickly, if a skirt is tight, you'll understand something about the topography. If the skirt is loose, you will see different sorts of relationships, maybe with the weather, with a sense of what's around you, you will begin to navigate the world differently because of what you're wearing. And you'll begin to notice different things about it. So with this understanding of the relationship between clothes, the body, the sensory engagement with the world, then we invite in a different set of relationships with it."



Kate, *above*, said environmental philosophers believe three things are at the root of the unsustainability crisis. *"One is a lack of connection with the world in which we live with nature. The second is a lack of connection with each other as human beings that's fallen away as we've all retreated into bubbles of individualism, perhaps facilitated by capitalism. And the third is a lack of connection to our true sense as a human being."*

Conclusions and recommendations

In the 21st century, ways of sourcing clothes range on a continuum from thoughtless buying and tossing fast fashion at one end through to engaged hands-on redesigning and upcycling at the other. This Fellowship focused on the engaged end and explored the pathways to sustainable clothing culture through citizens proactively regenerating their own agency in the wardrobe.

In *The Biology of Civilisation: understanding human culture as a force in nature*⁵ Australia's Professor Stephen Boyden said ecological sustainability and survival of human civilisation depended on three things: containing the population size; reducing the intensity of resource and energy use; and shifting to more ecologically sustainable technologies within a more biosensitive society. While this Fellowship cannot address the first issue, it can play a part in ameliorating the other two by pushing back against the dominant culture of consumption.

Producing new clothes requires inputs of fibre, labour, energy and water, and outputs of greenhouse gases and other pollutants. Actively extending the useful life of existing clothes by just nine months longer than average, reduces their carbon, water and waste footprints by 20-30 percent⁶.

This Fellowship found that when we extend the life of our clothes by becoming hands-on and actively engaged in our wardrobe, we regenerate our agency, gain health and wellbeing benefits, and reduce our material footprint.

Boyden identified the intangible psychosocial health needs (see Appendix 6) of humans and many align with this project. They include opportunities and incentives for: creative behaviour; learning and practising manual skills; co-operative small-group interactions as well as lifestyles conducive to a sense of personal involvement, purpose, responsibility, challenge, self-fulfilment and love.

These psychosocial health needs can be found in self-provisioning behaviours involved in making, doing and growing things for oneself. It contrasts with what has become the norm in recent decades of outsourcing to 'specialists' such as fast fashion supply chains. The consumer system of buying stuff does not meet our psychosocial needs. As **Emma Friedlander-Collins (54)** said: *"We need to become generalists again, rather than specialists."* When we become self-reliant and need to buy less, this means we need to earn less and therefore have more time to do the things we love.

This Fellowship found:

- academics are envisaging new ways that fashion can be in our lives
- activists are showing different ways through actions and advocacy
- social entrepreneurs are sharing skills via small businesses and social enterprises
- informed citizens are taking sustainable actions in ways that suit themselves

Citizens who have gained agency by being more hands-on with their clothes say it is:

- Empowering – they are liberated by wearing clothes that fit their shape and personal style
- Creative – they play, experiment and cultivate their imagination
- Connecting – it attracts people with similar values who are engaged for change
- Mindful – it enables calming, caring, thoughtful work with our hands
- Ethical and sustainable – it avoids exploitation of people, places and planet
- Affordable – they buy less of better quality and utilise reject resources

The people I met have become more self-reliant in various ways by developing skills and insights to make themselves independent of the fashion supply chain. They are reclaiming control of their wardrobe by being more hands-on in creatively making, mending, redesigning or restyling clothes

already around them to reduce waste and enhance wellbeing. They are empowered through what they wear and uninterested in slavishly following trends that provide fleeting satisfaction at best.

Although I was unable to visit Japan due to covid travel restrictions, I have earlier visited the Boro Museum, learned sashiko hand-stitching, and absorbed the ‘wabi sabi’ approach of treading lightly on the planet and not making oneself unhappy in pursuit of the unattainable goal of perfection.

Through this Fellowship, I tapped into the citizenry swimming against the all-consuming tide. They are engaging in hands-on processes that enable a consumption pause, taking time for self-reflection and working with what is at hand before making considered decisions in any new purchases.

These citizens are showing that culture change is possible when we inform ourselves and learn skills of independence and resourcefulness, and invest time in the process.

Most people I engaged with on this Fellowship were female, however men benefit from sewing skills too. In fact, men mending are ideally placed to lead the needed change, as visible mender Tom of Holland and quilter Zak Foster have shown. I recall the excitement expressed by one young man at a Bond University workshop I ran saying *“this is changing my life”* when he learned how easy it was to mend the small holes appearing in his favourite t-shirts. The barriers for men are the same as for women; lack of opportunities and/or willingness to allocate time to learn and do.

The following **RECOMMENDATIONS** might help citizens become more engaged in their wardrobes:

- A. more education around hand-sewing skills for mending, tinkering and mindfulness
- B. more opportunities to engage and share clothing resources, skills and creativity
- C. wellbeing services based around regenerating agency in the wardrobe
- D. redesign services that enable creative engagement and co-design
- E. more engagement through opportunities to practice permaculture and citizen science
- F. more awareness raising of unsustainable consumer culture and greenwashing
- G. localisation to promote and enable place-based fibre systems and culture

A. More education around hand-sewing skills for mending, tinkering and mindfulness

Simple hand-sewing skills are a tool for intentional living that enables more unique creations, freedom of choice and individual expression while engaging in less mass consumption.

Using a needle and thread is accessible, portable, and efficient for small tasks of caring for and adjusting clothes to extend their lifespan. Hand-sewing skills enable mending of most clothes and when we are able to mend and tweak our clothes to better fit our needs, we reduce our dependency and gain mindful connection to what we wear. We can redirect saved funds in constructive ways such as investing in fewer, higher quality items, or owning and to learning to use a sewing machine.

Hand-sewing skills and the motivations for them could be integrated into many learning situations, in TAFE colleges, schools and holiday programs. As home economics curriculum has been absorbed into design and technology, sewing capability may be further diminished. Sustainability is a cross-curriculum priority in the Australian Curriculum. Perhaps mending/hand-sewing skills could be woven into science, social science, geography or mathematics if teachers were motivated to do so. Classroom sessions could be augmented by online tutorials, such as those developed by Repair What You Wear. Training groups such as TAFE could teach skills-sets for alteration and repair as community skills, rather than just focusing on job skills for employment. Making and mending in public helps pique interest and curiosity that can help raise awareness of the usefulness of these skills.

B. More opportunities to engage and share clothing resources, skills and creativity

We need more fun, creative, thoughtful and provocative opportunities to engage with what we wear instead of shopping. Council libraries, sustainability hubs and community gardens and community groups are places which could extend opportunities to engage and share clothing and textile resources, skills and creative ideas. Existing creative groups and thrift shops could extend offerings to include mending and upcycling resources and experiences. Pattern systems, such as Modular Me developed by [Ministry of Handmade](#), have potential to empower sewists by supporting limitless variations of basic shapes. There is potential to develop how-to-make reality shows, in the same vein as cooking shows, as the success of the BBC's [Great British Sewing Bee](#) demonstrates.

We need more opportunities to tinker our clothes and develop self-reliance, lower-tech, less industrialised, smaller-scale solutions as described by Australian researcher Dr Katherine Wilson in *Tinkering: Australians reinvent DIY culture*⁷. Katherine described tinkering as “an iteration of freedom, pride, dignity, ethics and artisanal joy – an unfettered way to live according to one’s own measures. It can be practical and utilitarian, a form of economic production, but also a form of scholarship, play, adventure, resourcefulness and resilience. It can be a portal to social connection, community, spirituality, sanctuary, thrift, identity and political resistance”.

Tinkerers, upcyclers and redesigners devote time and energy to mending, creating, modifying and renovating for many reasons as described by my interviewees including material problem-solving, repair, hacking and activism. The rewards that drive these actions are agency, freedom, originality, experimentation, calculated risk, learning, play, autonomy, connection and commitment.

We have leading thinkers and capability in Australia and could take the lead in community sorting of textiles to maximize reuse opportunities.

C. Wellbeing services based around regenerating agency in the wardrobe

Repair of clothes translates to repair of self. When we mend our clothing we also mend ourselves. A sense of self-reliance in the wardrobe promotes wellbeing. Strategies encouraging playfulness within the wardrobe, may generate self-care, repair and self-expression through the process. More workshop opportunities could be developed to explore creativity in the wardrobe and generate wellbeing and ecological health benefits, in line with known psychosocial needs. State-based preventive health and promotion agencies, such as Health and Wellbeing Queensland, could support such workshop offerings.

Explorations of the healing benefits of mending could be shared through exhibitions in galleries and public libraries. An exemplar is [Eternally Yours](#): care, repair and healing at Somerset House, London.

It is known that craft is good for our health, as these articles from the [Craft Council](#) and [The Conversation](#) affirm and there may be options to more formally establish crafting as therapy. Health providers could advocate for more budgetary investment in therapeutic craft as social prescriptions for wellbeing, in place of or alongside, medical prescriptions and counselling.

D. Fashion services that enable engagement and co-design

The current model of producing fashion products then working out how to sell it is clearly unsustainable. Instead of just producing fashion products, there is a role for designers to help people develop their personal style without buying new. Fashion retail and fabric stores – in both suburban and city contexts – could include spaces to sew, repair or build creative relationships with clients. Engaging co-design experiences could be developed with designers commissioned to rework or bring modernity to treasured clothing and textiles. There are emerging opportunities for local designers to provide fashion services in the form of made-to-order or customized clothes for those citizens who

don't make for themselves. Many people are conditioned to believe they aren't creative and feel safer when they follow trends and patterns to do things the 'right way' to achieve certain outcomes. There is a role for designers in helping people cultivate their fashion-abilities.

Creative co-design or thrifted styling sessions could help expand creative potential and self-awareness. Designer and eco-stylist residencies in vintage and charity shops could support actualisation experiences of 'this' becoming 'that'. We need to design with circularity in mind, even when upcycling and adapting.

Not everybody has time, or motivation, to make, repair, upcycle or customize, so having options within local economies enables them to seek and support small business sewists and bespoke designers within local communities. Technology is providing solutions too, with mending apps such as [SoJo](#) connecting menders with citizens who want to outsource that task.

E. More engagement through opportunities to practice permaculture and citizen science

More education about and understanding of how we can apply permaculture in our lives is to be encouraged. Permaculture has been tried and tested for half a century, evolving over time as a design response to global challenges.

Grounded in observation of natural ecosystems which are then applied to create resilient, regenerative, and abundant living, permaculture is holistic and non-prescriptive, offering a set of useful design tools based on ethics, principles, and actions for living in harmony with nature. With its endless range of practical solutions to the big issues we face in the world – climate change, pollution, overconsumption, biodiversity loss and human conflict – permaculture makes perfect sense, at this time of disturbance and disruption. It enables us to be self-reliant in all our actions. It is a process that encourages and enables us to be part of the solution. It is grounded in a holistic approach to life that builds resilience, regeneration and sharing. It is the synthesis of traditional knowledge and modern science.

The permaculture ethics of earth care, people care and fair share, underpin 12 design principles that guide specific applications (Appendix 5). The principles are not rules telling us what to do. Rather they are guidelines encouraging us to think when we are deciding what to do. Applying permaculture to any situation involves working through a design process of gathering information before using strategies, techniques and tools to implement it within the ethical framework. Translated into action, permaculture is commonsense like a stitch in time saves nine. The 12 design principles provide easy opportunities to be more engaged with our clothing (see Appendix 3, [Permaculture in your Wardrobe](#)).

Science helps us understand natural phenomena and citizen science enables us to engage in experiments that connect us with what's going on in our world. More art/science/community collaborations through schools, universities and research groups helps people engage, understand and move towards more sustainable living. We can also do our own backyard science experiments to find out how long different fibres take to decompose in the compost (the synthetic fibres won't break down) and what colours are produced from different dye plant leaves, flowers, seeds and bark under different conditions. Using food waste such as onion skins, passionfruit skins, or avocado pips with water and vinegar can generate colour changes in natural fibres when placed in a jar in the sun or boiled in a pot.

F. More awareness raising of unsustainable consumer culture and greenwashing

Citizens in Western countries are faced with conflicting messages about the need for climate action on one hand and consumerist culture on the other. **Kate Fletcher [50]** said sustainability strategies

deployed within a system that is continually growing cannot be effective, and economic growth logic is the single biggest factor inhibiting deep change and the necessary shift towards Earth Logic.

We need to learn to love what we have, to feel satisfied that it is enough and we are enough. Mindfulness, noticing and paying attention in the moment can undermine the desire to buy something new, Fletcher said. There is a need for more research into why people buy what they do and to understand more about the psychology of consumption.

With cost of living pressures beginning to take hold, a life-changing personal reassessment of consumer culture around shopping, spending and saving behaviours could be timely. Pausing before purchasing, as **Rachel Smith [55]** recommends, can provide transformative insights and save money.

Legislation to hold fast fashion brands accountable is emerging⁸. Greenwashing is being called out and at least one fast fashion brand is facing court proceedings for misleading marketing⁹. It is helpful that reality TV programs such as *Love Island* are shifting their alignment from fast fashion brands to Ebay secondhand¹⁰ yet other influencers often funded brands continue to promote fashion bingeing.

There are many broken links of knowledge and understanding about clothing and textiles that need patching with independent information. We can build awareness about sustainable clothing habits into relevant group discussions (library talks, education sessions, youth groups, gardening groups).

Change can happen when we regenerate our agency and stop shopping to solve problems in our wardrobe, or as emotional therapy, and instead work with what we already have. Joining a 'no new clothes' campaign can help break consumer habits and provide space to observe and interact. This four-stage process can help kick-start the change: stop buying for a period of time; study your style and needs based on body shape, work and life-stage; sort your existing wardrobe, mend and adapt clothes where possible; seek out responsible choices from local designers when filling any gaps. A quick thought process before buying might be - does it have any plastic (buttons, blended fibres, zips) and is it ethically made – and then only buying it if you absolutely love it.

G. Localisation to promote and enable place-based fibre systems and culture

Australia is a large producer of high-quality cotton and wool, but most is exported as a commodity and feeds into complex global textile supply chains. Only three percent¹¹ of clothes are manufactured locally. Processes involved in turning fibre into clothing are largely out of sight and out of mind and this disconnection means there is little understanding of the clothing story.

There is growing interest in local provenance and local manufacturing and making. Spinning is the only part of the fabric supply chain that is not currently possible in Australia. Fully local supply chains from farm to fashion, including the potential for nimble circularity and small-scale mills, would be valuable and I continue to advocate for that. Government and industry support for innovative local manufacturing, and training skilled machinists – or sponsoring genuine talent migration – is to be encouraged. The Linen Project in The Netherlands and Fibershed are examples of rebuilding small-scale local textile industries, as is Full Circles Fibres in Queensland.

In a climate changing world, we need infrastructure in place to secure geographical hedging and community resilience for manufacturing of essential textile needs (for example, fire-fighters' uniforms, reusable cloth PPE) as well as discretionary needs. Higher labour costs associated with localisation may be ameliorated in an environment of rising global transport costs and erratic freight schedules, particularly if sustainability and ethical measures such local natural fibres of known provenance, choosing quality over quantity, factoring-in price per wear, and being made-to-order, are considered.

Dissemination and implementation

The ideas in this report are freely available for others to adopt, adapt and advance anywhere in the world because these changes are needed everywhere.

With a new Federal Government in Australia and climate action enshrined in legislation designed to reduce greenhouse gas pollution by 43 percent in 2030 and reach net zero by 2050, every level of society is required to focus on ways to reduce its carbon footprint. As well as a collective call to action, this report includes many entry points for individuals wanting to make a difference through their clothing choices.

I will be sharing the findings and recommendations through a communications strategy, political engagement strategy, a schedule of events (talks and workshops) with various groups, and ongoing collaboration opportunities.

Communications: I will implement a communications strategy through my social media channels and seek mainstream media opportunities to share the findings and recommendations because the interest in this subject continues to grow. While the Fellowship was in progress, I shared individual interviews and stories through Instagram and Facebook. Now that the report is lodged and their content consolidated into findings and recommendations, I will share these and the interviews through the same social media platforms as well as other platforms such as LinkedIn and Twitter. I am seeking opportunities to share the findings through community publications and networks.

Political engagements: I am seeking Ministerial meetings with all levels of government – federal, state and local – because this work aligns with their emerging textile waste strategies. There has been significant progress in Australia on this textile waste issue since I addressed the Brisbane City Council in 2015 on this as a [matter of public importance](#) and there is much work still to be done.

Events (talks and workshops): I have an ongoing schedule of talks and workshops, online and in-person, which provides immediate opportunities to share these findings within Queensland, New South Wales and the ACT. Other opportunities are still being finalized and I invite any interested groups to get in touch.

Collaborations: I will continue to build alliances through collaborations with groups that have aligned values and purpose. Examples include: The Painted River Project with Dr Leo Robba from The University of Western Sydney; local businesses such as Merino Country on zero-waste projects; Reverse Garbage as ambassador for the WornOUT refashion/wearable art showcases; and with clinical psychologist Dr Kirsty Williamson to refine making for wellbeing sessions that build individual and community resilience. I have accepted a nomination to join the Queensland Spinners Weavers and Fibre Arts board and will be supporting a number of projects including the new ReMakers group.

During a decade of advocating for slow clothing approaches to reduce our material footprint, I have found the organic, grassroots spread of sensible and affordable ideas to be effective in inspiring and enabling individuals to regenerate their agency in the wardrobe. By wearing clothes that are visibly different from the mainstream – sometime carrying a unique signature that speaks to their history – we demonstrate sustainable values, pique curiosity and prick consciences in gentle ways that have the potential to lead to positive changes.

Personal insights and photos

It was affirming to be with, and learn from, people with similar values and experiences of the emotional and ecological benefits of being engaged in the physical creation of their own wardrobe.

I was fortunate this Fellowship included a budget for hands-on workshop opportunities with Katrina Rodabaugh and Cal Patch in Upstate New York.

People like us are deploying time and creativity to stimulate emotional, cognitive and spiritual aspects of our being through the generation of garments that reimagine and connect us with what we wear. This contrasts with the mainstream alternative of buying shelf-ready, stock-standard and impersonal garments just because they are there, and likely at a sale price too.

Photos, *right and below*, are from the magic studio day I spent with Katrina Rodabaugh in Upstate New York sharing dyeing and redesign knowledge and skills. We dyed and stitched and chatted, and lunched, in what was a lived experience of what my Churchill Fellowship is all about.





I had similarly fabulous experiences with Amy DuFault and this photo, *above*, is with Amy in her kitchen at Cape Cod taken by her son. Amy wears a dress and self-made knotty necklace she dyed, and I wear a self-made indigo-dyed linen dress. The photo, *below*, was taken by Amy when we visited Great Marsh Farm and walked to the salt marshes and later had fish and chips for dinner. I'm wearing a zero waste wrap I made from Merino Country offcuts that I dyed in bark and then machine-stitched together and re-wearing my pinny made from discarded denim.



My road trips in America and through the UK were favourite times because I had opportunities to enjoy the countryside and local communities. Driving on the other side of the road in the US proved more manageable than I thought it might be. I found driving in traffic was easier because you just follow the other cars. I had to concentrate more on country roads when there was no traffic around and when making turns I engaged a friend's mantra 'righty tighty, lefty losey'. The photo *below* is in the countryside travelling from Edinburgh to West Yorkshire.



I circumnavigated the world, travelling about 40,000km in two months, and in all that time in public spaces around planes and trains, I saw just two people engaged in craft projects (one knitting socks, one doing cross-stitch). Thinking about it, I realised I rarely saw anyone reading a magazine or newspaper either. Obviously our portable communication devices are ubiquitous and claim all our spare time and attention when we allow them to do so.

Below are photos on the making of a dress as a memory of my Fellowship. I purchased some vintage Americana fabric and notions from Swanson's Fabrics in Massachusetts, I used the pattern I drafted with Cal Patch in upstate New York, and stitched it while travelling by plane from Boston to London, then by train from London to Aberdeen, then wore it on a hot summer's day in London when I lunched at Daylesford Organic farm to café and visited Portobello Road market. When I was hand-stitching the dress on the plane and train, it sparked curious conversations and people appeared mesmerized by the movement of the needle and thread because these actions are rarely seen in public. Making our making visible is clearly important for raising awareness about how portable handcraft processes for making and mending are available to us all and come with many psycho-social health benefits.





These are a few of the photos with friends I gathered along the way: *above left* Ros Studd in Aberdeen, *above right* Claire-Wellesley Smith at Shipley in West Yorkshire, *below* at lunch with Karishma Kelsey in Auckland, and *far below* on Waihi Beach in NZ with Melissa Pentecost-Spargo.



Glossary

AGENCY: A feeling of control over actions and choices, in this case pertaining to what we wear.

FAST FASHION: a term generally used to describe low-cost on-trend items designed to be worn only a few times before being discarded.

GREENWASHING: communication and marketing that exaggerates eco initiatives and progress

UPCYCLING: Upcycling in the context of this project is a general term encompassing varied ways of being engaged in your wardrobe by thrifting, making, mending, adapting, sharing, reviving, restyling, refashioning and salvaging

Appendices

Appendix 1

This is the [Slow Clothing Manifesto](#) I developed in 2015 as a way of scoping everyday practices, actions and choices we all can take to reduce the impact of our clothes.

10 ways to reduce your material footprint

SLOW CLOTHING manifesto

think	make thoughtful, ethical, informed choices
natural	treasure fibres from nature and limit synthetics
quality	buy well once, quality remains after price is forgotten
local	support local makers, those with good stories and fair trade
few	live with less, have a signature style, minimal wardrobe, unfollow
care	mend, patch, sort, sponge, wash less, use cold water, line dry
make	learn how to sew as a life skill, value DIY and handmade
revive	rewear, relove, vintage, exchange, rent and swap
adapt	upcycle, refashion, eco-dye, create new from old
salvage	donate, pass on, rag, weave, recycle or compost



Appendix 2

Below are the 90 social media posts from my Fellowship as a summary of what the 55 interviewees said during my travels in May-June 2022. You can listen to the extended interviews on [YouTube](#) or access each individually via the link provided at the end of each post below.

1. Karishma Kelsey

New Zealand-based former designer and teacher Karishma Kelsey encourages us to rediscover the spiritual joy in making and mending our own garments. "In that moment of creating or mending, you are in a moment of meditation that generates quietness and blackness. That is just joy. It just absolutely puts you into a calm state and that is really the essence of it."

Kelsey believes a magical part of the mending process is that anything can be everything, and anything is everything. "The stream of possibility that comes with mending or re-creating, or recycling or upcycling is the joy of endless possibility."

"Imagine you are standing in front of your wardrobe, and from that narrative of endless possibility of creative expression you intuitively pick pieces such as an orange blouse, a denim pair of shorts and some checked leggings. That's you being creative in that moment. Initially you may have (critical) voices in your head but after a while it's the magic, it's the creation, because you followed your intuition for what you wanted.

"That is how creative expression and the concept of anything is everything translates into style. Style is an expression of your intuition of your authentic self, your true self, your spiritual innate being. You follow that intuition in the front of your wardrobe and play. What I call the Miraculous Me Movement is just magical playfulness. You are not thinking about what marketing trends dictate, you are just picking what appeals to you in that moment. The more creative you are, the more conscious you become.

"We are urging people to experiment and experience creativity because when you are playing, you are growing. And when you are growing, you are becoming more conscious. And when you are more conscious, you're creating connection to self. And from self, it becomes interconnection to life and to Earth. And from that space of interconnection, in the playful joy of your life, you don't actually want to damage something that's close to you."

"Something happens in your brain. The more playful you are, the more creative you are, the more conscious you become and the less addicted you are to needing a new thing. Breaking that addiction of needing a new thing means you start to curate with what you have. What actually happens is that when you create, the happy hormones serotonin and dopamine are released, these are the same hormones that you get from shopping. The difference is that because it's creative, there's a consciousness and an awareness that is longer lasting."

While many are still addicted to shopping, as evidenced by the latest data on growth of the fashion industry, Karishma believes there is a growing movement of people who are saying they're done with it. "I'm finding more students, more young people are navigating this terrain yet they don't quite understand it. People are wanting to know what happens if they don't follow the trend. Why is it that my body is supposed to be skinnier? Especially if I'm a different nationality? So there's more of this conversation happening now than a decade ago, and yes, we've got a long way to go."

"It's a ripple effect that is building. The sun doesn't stop shining just because the clouds are covering it. If you watch the ocean and think about a wave, it's really slow as it picks up the momentum.

We're becoming more connected to Earth-based reality and I think it's because we are remembering, we are waking up and remembering we are all connected."

We talked about her [@miraculous me movt](#) style activism and philosophy: your body is your canvass; creativity is your birthright; the superpowers of colour energies and following your intuition. Listen on YouTube <https://youtu.be/cxG0BO3f0Hk>

2. Melissa Pentecost-Spargo

Bringing fresh life to old textiles by adding colour from nature is the work of Melissa [@woventhreads](#) strongly motivated by a desire to reduce waste. Melissa gathers and experiments in gentle ways to add story, colour and character to natural fibre textiles that might otherwise become landfill. She's experimented with purple sage leaves, avocado skins and pips, and forages in her own environment in her backyard and neighbour's backyard, and facilitated workshops using rescued fibres and natural colours. She is excited to inspire others to do something themselves by rescuing textiles and giving them a new life with a new color, a new look or utility. "It can be such a connective thing that makes other people excited about that journey." Some of her favourite pieces are a wall hanging woven from a multitude of colours and textures, and a drape of purple sage leaf hammered using the tataki zome technique otherwise known as botanical bashing. Engaging with textiles in this way reminds Melissa of growing up with her mother dyeing textiles in the family home using native flax, onion skins, eucalyptus leaves and bark. Listen on YouTube <https://youtu.be/dywU83XUslw>

3. Bea Lorimer

Upcycling is a way of life when you wear upcycled clothes, start a creative business [@heke.design](#) based on upcycling, co-found an upcycling shop and teach upcycling. Here's to you Bea Lorimer, thanks for sharing your thoughts, ideas and actions on Waiheke around ways to be more hands-on with clothes for health, wellbeing and sustainability. She believes in doing the right thing for the environment, motivating others to look at clothing differently, seeing value in waste and appreciating colour. She believes starting out with simple upcycling that doesn't require sewing skills (ie applying scissors to t-shirts) can inspire people to learn what they need to do more upcycling in their wardrobe. I chatted with Bea as part of my Churchill Fellowship interviews on ways that being hands-on with clothes can help reduce textile waste and enhance wellbeing. Listen on YouTube https://youtu.be/X_W-3WvtETc

4. Geraldine Tew

A lack of making is causing unwellness says social justice and environmental entrepreneur Geraldine Tew, *right*, founder of creative business [ReCreators](#) which provides hands-on workshops for sustainability and wellbeing. She believes empowerment comes through learning a skill to make a finished item that brings a sense of achievement and accomplishment. "It's those positive feelings that you get when you create by hand and gain a sense of design, which fundamentally has been robbed by hyper- consumerism. People have lost their skills and they've lost hobbies. We've got these quick phone pings or these quick games or this quick purchase. And



actually, we know that's fundamentally leading to mental illness whereas making leads to mental wellness." Mindful making and upcycling is also bringing the community together with a common sense of purpose to around environmental concerns. Ger said there's a direct correlation between income and consumerism and waste to landfill, hence the need to commit to degrowth if society is serious about reducing our collective environmental footprint. This will involve cutting the average 9-tonne carbon lifestyle down to 2-tonne by reducing consumerism, meat-eating, transportation and international travel. She said behaviour change surveys showed 75% of people said they were more inspired to reduce consumption after doing ReCreators workshops, having a sense of achievement and accomplishment in making. Listen on YouTube <https://youtu.be/Fqr1RT58yCM>

5. Sonya Philip

Sonya Philip is a woman with real-life individual and independent style who believes in the many benefits of being an active participant in the creation of your own wardrobe. Unable to find clothes she liked that worked with her body shape is what drove @sonyaphilip @100actsofsewing to solve the problem by learning to make and design her own. Being able to sew enables you to sew your way out of a 'clothing desert' and wear fun clothes you love. "Making is empowering, it enabled me to create own personal style, and enjoy clothes that are not available ready-to-wear. Making engenders appreciation, helps interrupt consumption cycles and offers an alternative. From a sustainability perspective, I use less, shop less, and am more motivated to take care of clothes to ensure they wear well and last long." Sonya says if people find making clothes intimidating or they don't know where to start: find something you love wearing and figure out the colour, fabric and shape you love, then work out how to make it. Start simple and grow your skills. Sewing can very complex but there is a logic to it which you don't understand until you are learning to do it. Sonya has made her hobby her work. She sells patterns, has written a book *The Act of Sewing* and was travelling to teach workshops until COVID disrupted that. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/m7K645uFiyE>

6. William Barros

William Barros, *right*, takes pride in sewing using rescued materials and has pride in his work at SCRAP (an anachronism for Scrounger Centre for Reusable Art Parts) to keep textiles out of landfill and provide affordable access to materials for San Francisco creatives. After being a SCRAP @scrapsf customer for years, and now working there, his knowledge of textiles has expanded through interacting with the upcycling community and customers who visit. He's getting smarter, challenging himself and says learning new things is good for the brain. "I



find it very meditative to sew and I like handling the materials and yarns and presenting them beautiful ready for sale. I get an endorphin rush from touching certain silks and seeing how they flow as a flag." William reckons there should be a SCRAP in every major city, because it is a win-win helping donors and customers keep resources circulating in cost-effective and sustainable ways. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/yRtTYTNnhFs>

7. Jake Lindsay

Jake Lindsay, *right*, said his pathway into creativity was poverty and dumpster diving. Now he takes satisfaction in making something from nothing, from something someone was abandoning, and satisfaction in thumbing his nose at high arts society. He's worked at SCRAP @scrap-sf for more than a decade and learned from every customer and employee here, picking the brains of the artists and intellectuals who frequent the place for creative resources and inspiration. Jake @dickwillows has a found-art background, pranking the city by leaving sculptures, and making costumes and masks using non-conventional sewing and binding methods. He reckons the easiest way to reduce waste is to turn the tap off on disposables. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/AcZg1XxRL4I>



8. Keri Ponce

Small farmer Keri Ponce from Potter Valley, north-west of San Francisco, believes in longevity for loved pieces of clothing that fit her and is always mending to keep them in service. She wants them to last because they get better with age. When the time comes for the first mend, she thinks "oh it is just about to get good". Keri has mended stuff all her life, growing up with parents who did for themselves. She enjoys self-sufficiency, being resourceful and capable. "I like the challenge, to look at old stuff and see what I can reuse. I want things a certain way and don't see them available so I make them. Necessity is the mother of invention. We live in a world of retail therapy. I have purchased some things I love but nothing feels as good as when you made it yourself, especially if it is wonky. Retail therapy is highly overrated and short-lived. I love to reclaim things, give them another life and keep them out of landfill. They are then increasing the aesthetics of my place by being useful while I pick up new skills in doing so. It seems like common sense to me. I treat myself to 6-10 new pieces of clothing a year, as an investment. If something comes in, something has to go out. The closet can't get any bigger. I don't think people realise how much pressure it is to have too much stuff ... not just getting the money to buy it but actually the baggage of carrying it through life. When mending, it feels like getting something done but you get to be perfectly still. I value and need that stillness. A moment to breathe, intention for the peace when a lot of the day is filled with tasks. Mending doesn't feel like a task, it just feels more intentional. It makes you stop and take time to accomplish something, and it is meditative and soothing too." Listen <https://youtu.be/rWDUelHKDlc>

9. Katie Ring

Katie Ring feels limited by the clothes she can buy, drained by the shopping experience and has a desire to bring clothing options more into her own hands. Katie identifies as a creative and wears many hats as a chef, herbalist, gardener and early childhood educator currently living in Sebastopol, California. Dyeing, thrifting, mending jeans are hands-on actions she is already taking. "It feels empowering to be more involved. I can do something. The desire to do more is there. "I am always interested in colour, creative clothes and being able to express my style, felt limited by what I can buy. I feel drained by the shopping experience. I need clothes I feel good in and feel I can

express myself. “Fast fashion is tempting, because it is a quick fix, looks cute and I can buy it. Seeing other people around me wearing ‘slow fashion’ is not the norm. When friends turn up in new things, sometimes I feel tempted and sometimes angry. I wish there was not so much precedence on finding new things to wear. “I bought a white dress and dyed it with madder (natural root dye) and that felt good. I used to practise yoga where I would wear a lot white and I have dyed those clothes with avocado and onion skins. “I want to express myself more authentically through clothes. I want depth in the story of my garments. I want a feeling of pride and ownership for what I put on my body, the materials I am engaging with, and have respect and appreciation for the history, colour and meaning of my clothes. Listen YouTube https://youtu.be/DDrU5FS_u08

10. Craig Wilkinson



When Sonoma County indigo farmer Craig Wilkinson, *left*, realised the complexity of his vision to develop a clothing line based on biodynamic cotton, he decided instead to focus on natural colour by growing *Persicaria tinctoria* plants. Now he is sharing seedlings and knowledge about growing and using indigo within the Northern California Fibershed. “My interest in biodynamic agriculture speaks to quality and taking care of the land. I feel blessed to be able to take the journey.” Although it a small research and development hobby at this stage, Craig believes that as plants become available on a bigger scale then it

will make an impact as a source of local colour. “I could see where the pulse was going with fashion brands wanting sustainability and transparency, and every year as I’m getting seeds out to folks there’s a ripple effect of increased awareness.” Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/0--n-S8EMdA> (second half)

11. Rebecca Burgess

The soil to soil connection in the production, use and regeneration of natural fibres is one that Rebecca Burgess has been making for more than a decade through the Fibershed movement originating from California in the United States. The movement is shining light on ways of transforming fibre and dye systems from the ground up and engaging everyone involved in the complex process of bringing clothes into the world for people to wear. It is a vision for place-based textile sovereignty which aims to include, rather than exclude, all the people, plants, animals, and cultural practices within a fibershed. It begins with the source of raw materials and includes transparency and connectivity in the way it is converted into clothing, from soil to skin and back to the soil. In Rebecca’s Northern California fibershed, based at San Geronimo, natural plant dyes and fibers such as flax, wool, cotton, hemp and indigo are being grown using practices that are both traditional and modern. She says many of these cropping and livestock systems are showing benefits

that are ameliorating the causes of climate change, increasing resilience to drought and rebuilding local economies. Through her learning journeys and experiences in place-based fiber and dye communities, Rebecca believes what is no lack of motivation among people for grassroots textile systems. What is needed is the will and courage to appropriately resource and financially invest in them so they can function to farm, ranch, mill, sew, repair and cycle materials into new clothes and eventually into compost. Rebecca's book *Fibershed: growing a movement of farmers, fashion activists, and makers for a new textile economy* is an invitation to engage with all parts of the growing, creating, wearing and caring processes of our clothing. She believes implementing a deeper understanding of the earth's biogeochemical and physical properties and cycles is a critical step to generating new textile businesses that can help reduce the legacy load of carbon from our atmosphere. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/0--n-S8EMdA>

12. Bron McInerney

Landfill diversion through creative reuse of unique designer materials from the San Francisco Bay Area is the aim of FabMo as an all-volunteer nonprofit that rescues discontinued samples and makes them available to the public. FabMo saves more than 70 tons of materials from entering landfill each year and distributes these rescued materials to thousands of artists, crafters, sewists, makers and educators through in-person events and via an online store at fabmo.org. I dropped into the FabMo warehouse in Sunnyvale, California and chatted to FabMo honorary treasurer Bron McInerney. She grew up in New Zealand at a time when everybody shared and made do, when clothes were not looked upon as a possession, and in her family first-up was best-dressed. After living in the United States for decades, she says people there are becoming more ecologically conscious; once upon time wouldn't dream of wearing secondhand but are now finding it is fashionable. Children are teaching their parents about the need for change because they can see what they are inheriting. Bron is cautious of accumulation because she already has enough to last the rest of her life and then some. Listen YouTube (first speaker) <https://youtu.be/egNtokoRDl4>

13. Katherine Latson

FabMo volunteer Katherine Latson has made a conscious decision not to buy new clothes and instead looks in her closet and chooses something she can change, paint or dye to make "new" again. She is excited to see what she can produce from resources she already has because what she creates makes her feel fabulous. Listen YouTube (second speaker) <https://youtu.be/egNtokoRDl4>

14. Melissa Wilson

Melissa Wilson believes clothes have utility and she adapt all hers to work with her particular body shape. Melissa believes if we follow our own narrative around style and choices, we make choices that delight us and everything will go together. She loves volunteering at FabMo because it solves her need for consumption without adding to waste. "It is expensive to be an artist, and I see these resources as a creative gift for the community to repurpose." Listen YouTube (third speaker) <https://youtu.be/egNtokoRDl4>

15. Jaki Canterbury

Jaki Canterbury brought together all her skills, experience and heart desires into the creation of slowfiber in Monterey, California, as a place to trade textiles and sewing supplies, and restitch community in the workshop space. Jaki had hit a turning point in life when divorce and empty nest converged to give her time to breathe. In that time, she noticed the work of people like Katrina Rodabaugh @katrinarodabaugh and Jessica Marquez @miniaturerhino and joined the fashion revolution movement when a pair of Levis 501s she bought as a teenager and still loves featured in the second @fash_rev fanzine #LovedClothesLast. She started the slowfiber project in 2017 and

opened the @slowfiber store two years ago, at the start of COVID pandemic. Jaki says she hand stitches every night at 10pm after the work is done because she finds it meditative. She's starting a meditative hand-stitching class because she believes it saves hearts, saves souls and saves minds. "We are hard-wired to work with our hands, it is life-affirming work for us all. Because of Covid we got to slow down and try something new. I binge listen and stitch and find it is curative work. Slow stitching, construction stitching and social stitching are all ways to bring people together to stitch. We are hardwired for this kind of work and are sorely missing it. We need to stop thinking of it as somebody else's work, it is life-affirming work for us all. Jaki brings in other teachers and is building a community around this place to share ideas and skills. "Slowfiber is the best thing I've done, apart from being a mother." She is working to overcome the cultural road blocks which include the fear of failure, the lack of skills and the lack of priority for making things. There is fear, being too busy and some lack of interest, "Many think they don't have to make things, so they don't." Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/F5m-qM73SNM>

16. Erin Gafill

Professional painter Erin Gafill, *right*, @erinleegafill grew up at remote Big Sur California and had a creative childhood that connected to imagination and materials which has carried her through life. It is worth noting upfront that her uncle is colourful knit legend Kaffe Fassett. "I feel the act of making with my hands is a path to wellbeing. We shouldn't have to be reminded of that because it is innate. We have become removed from making – our clothes, food and entertainment. I was lucky to grow up under-resourced. The junk that was left around became our resources for making. "Two and a half years ago, Jaki from Slowfiber asked me to take a pledge to not buy new clothes for six weeks. That wasn't just about not buying, it was also about reflecting on how much I already owned. This was a pivot to be connected to clothes as a source of creativity and I have been revisiting all the clothes I own and making them make sense today. We are looking forward to dye camp as a way of connecting to the natural colours from where I live. It is a sense of the visual aesthetic and utilitarian combining. "Through this process, I am realising I have everything I need already around me. I have no reason to buy anything new for the rest of my life. It has made me more conscious that if I choose to buy I am more thoughtful, and



not shopping for entertainment or anti-anxiety. I look at fashion and am aware how much dis-ease there is from things that are being sold to us. I am choosing to be more conscious, and anything I wear now I want to have a connection to it. Thoughtfully and with intentionality, the making and mending and the wearing, investing my creative mind into something that is also very utilitarian. “When I am stitching, I feel calm. When I pick up a needle and thread, it is a path for me to feel grounded and whole, and it improves my wellbeing instantaneously. When my hands are working with needle and thread, I access that connection which is a path to wellbeing for me and I love sharing that with others. There is a remembering, a coming back to ourselves and the simple things that matter. It is more important how the work makes me feel, not the look itself. Through the process, I am invested in not just the outcome but the felt sense of wellbeing. I work as a teacher at cultural organisations such as museums and it is so much more engaging if we can hook in not from a do good, but from a FEEL good perspective. I am grateful to have that these experiences in childhood. I wish all children could cultivate the self-calming and anti-anxiety benefits of creativity and the empowering sense of capacity and autonomy that comes with these skills. Read more <https://textilebeat.com/lifelong-benefits-of-creative-childhood/>

17. Dina Fayer

People are more emotionally involved in their own presentation when they are in the driver’s seat on what they look like at the end of the day, said San Francisco’s BRITEX FABRICS manager Dina Fayer, *right*. “When they have their clothes made, or make them themselves, they have agency, and can wear what they do not see in stores. It is what missing



(from ready to wear), they never find ‘me’. Positive mental health benefits are a spin-off of that. While Dina can sew and does a lot of designing of garments and for homes, her mother is the seamstress in the family because she has the infrastructure and knowledge. “I enjoy watching my mum’s happiness and thinking of the person who made it when I wear it. You don’t have to do yourself, there are many talented seamstresses in San Francisco. Many have a long--lasting relationships, going to the same person is like having the same hair stylist, who knows your body. Dina said people who are conscious of what they buy, make and wear are part of solution to fast fashion. They have consideration of resources. That also have consideration to pass on to another person because they see value in what they have made or owned. “Heirloom sewing is still happening, when you made pants that you grew out of you are very happy to give them to someone you know. It is personal. So much fashion is seen as a finished product with a tag on it, and you never see the maker. When you know the maker, there is an honour in that. “In the pandemic, people sewed more, they started with masks and got more interested. Our website is going gangbusters. Always hard to buy fabric online, but we try to make it a visceral experience through the language we use to describe it. “I am cynical but in the past few years I am heartened and touched by the amount of emotion and skill young people are showing, and we enjoy watching them come back wearing what they have made. Slow fashion is on the rise. You only need a simple sewing machine to do it, you don’t want the machine to be smarter than you are. Listen here <https://youtu.be/8tDRxMG4a7M>

18. Kate Sekules

Kate Sekules intervenes in her entire wardrobe at all times, in a process she calls co-design. She prefers clothes that have been operated on and hasn't needed to buy new clothes for years because she's invested in good stuff. Garments that have traces of wear and memory she finds most interesting and has a sense of responsibility and stewardship for them. Mending and menditation are everyday practices for this academic and author of *Mend! A refashioning manual and manifesto*. She believes we need to urgently change the way we "consume" clothes, not by lecturing people but by modeling fun and alternative ways to engage with the clothes we already own. Mend March and menditation are processes Kate is known for on @visiblemend on Instagram. She believes the temptingness of cheapness of new clothes is a problem society has to navigate its way out of and believes the answer lies in the power of needle and thread through mending. "Once anyone has picked up a needle and done a little mend, they get hooked. There's something about the sewing circle and circular movement of needle while mending. They just need to get over the first hurdle and learning how to use it." Kate's earlier career was as editor *Culture and Travel* magazine, before setting up *refashioner.com* for clothes that tell a story, her visible mending practice then an academic career with a MA in dress history, an MPhil in material culture and beginning a PhD in Material Culture focusing on mending at Bard Graduate Centre. Listen here

<https://youtu.be/Yz124S59ECE>

19. Dhamar Romo Chavez

FABSCRAP at Brooklyn is a textile recycling not-for-profit that works with industries to recycle and redistribute waste materials. As community co-ordinator at the @fab_scrap Brooklyn Warehouse in New York City, Dhamar Romo Chavez, *right*, oversees workshops and the volunteers who help sort the materials to keep them in circulation or be turned into shoddy. Since working at FABSCRAP for more than a year, Dhamar says almost all her clothing comes from the Reuse Room where



fully constructed garments are on-sold. Speaking about her personal approach to clothes, Dhamar said she loves to dress well and have fun doing it. She loves interacting with her clothes, thrifting and fixing them, adding patches for dyeing them so they look a bit different. Although she also has the skills to sew and completely create garments, she often uses those skills to upcycle and create from thrifted materials because they are so readily available. Because she studied garment construction at university, Dhamar empathizes with the work it takes to create clothing. "I've always been interested in the process of making clothing. I know it takes a lot of effort. I think our way of treating clothing has degraded so much in the past 50 years. Allowing myself to empathize with a garment worker has allowed me to better look after my clothing and make it last longer." Dhamar agrees there are wellbeing benefits in being able to express your individuality and your personality by creating her own clothes. "Yeah, absolutely. I think there's a lot of fun in that. I think we like to upgrade our closet every now and then. And that's totally fine. But we have all the materials needed already. And

being able to express yourself in a way that isn't harming other people on the planet is super important. So I do find it meaningful to be able to express myself in a way that I think is also continuing to have clothing in circulation." "I think in mending, there's a lot of calming. There's also a lot of pride and happiness and seeing something that didn't exist before but now it does. And it's exactly what you thought it was going to be or it actually looks completely different than what you thought it was going to be. And both are really fun experiences." Listen YouTube

https://youtu.be/PHbALkQ9_w8

20. Emi Stearn

Emi Stearn @emu.kitty is inspired by textiles when it comes to design, but working @fabscrap has influenced her view on fashion. Here she has mendables and resources that enable creative self-expression through clothes that do not conform to what industry says is trendy. In this way she can be influenced by trends but not controlled by them. She says trends are often arbitrary and comedic, when you see all the waste they produce. She learned to sew from her Gran and attributes creative classes at @marwenarts while growing up in Chicago for finding her creativity. After studying fashion design at Pratt in Brooklyn she became concerned about the exploitation of workers and the environment, and worked in a vintage store and now at FABSCRAP looking after the visual aspects of the online store. Emi's motivation for being hands-on with her clothes include self-expression, self-sufficiency, creative problem-solving and fun. "I feel more myself if I make my own clothes and am genuinely expressing and showing the real me. The benefit of being able to rescue and recycle resources is an extra plus but not the main motivation." Mending and upcycling are helpful for her emotional wellbeing. "Creating brings me serotonin when I finish a project and that helps." Emi uses creativity as a way to counter insecurity and self-doubt. "I sometimes take for granted the skills, passion and interest I have in textiles. I love that I can do it for work too and that it brings people together. Yesterday I met two random people, chatting about what we were wearing. It leads to conversations and connection, it is real." Mending and upcycling can help so much in reducing waste because somehow society has this weird collective thought that if something has hole we get rid of it because clothes are so cheap. We need to share these skills and knowledge. Emi wishes mending was taught in school because we as humans need to know how things are made. "We take it for granted because so much is at our fingertips and we can just buy it. Yet so much goes into each garment, people are disconnected and desensitized. If you know how clothes are made, they have more respect and less waste and can reuse in some way. Mending is super important. Emi believes a societal shift is needed in the way we think about, produce and consume goods, and a world reckoning with capitalism. Brands need to be held accountable for their waste and excess, and reduce the number of collections they produce each year because there are already enough clothes on the planet for centuries to come. Listen on YouTube https://youtu.be/toAo9_mshSc

21. Renew and Waste no More by Eileen Fisher

Leadership is an action. Taking responsibility for what it makes led @eileenfisherny to envisage additional lives for clothes after the initial sell. There's the 1st life of garments made to last, the 2nd life of returned gently worn Renew garments @eileenfisherrenow and the 3rd life of garments transformed into custom-felted @wastenomore artworks, bags and pillows. I've been following this company for years since I heard Eileen Fisher speak out about the waste issues in her industry. So good to get the train up the Hudson Valley to Irvington and drop into the Learning Lab and see the beautiful stages of regeneration of natural fibres. I guess the 4th life is composting back to carbon, oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen from which natural fibres are derived. No one was available for interview because I arrived without notice, but pleased to see they also host skill development sewing and knitting drop-in sessions on Saturdays too.

22. Assoc Prof Otto Von Busch

If you start by darning socks, it teaches you that you can repair other things which is not our habit because they are cheap and mass produced. As we start repairing, we learn commitment to socks and social relationships. They are not just used and thrown out. If we accept the mended look, that brings a sense of repair acceptance. There's a connection to Buddhist teaching, and how we live wisely with coming decay, aging and death. Fashion is the opposite of that. We can be gentle, live wisely, accept our changing proportions and that materials age and garments die. This is life. Yes mending is helpful for wellbeing, says Otto von Busch associate professor at Parsons School of Fashion in New York. About two decades ago, Otto wrote about hacktivism and published self-passage open source manuals as cookbooks of how to remake the garments that are dying in the back of the wardrobe. His idea was to reclaim them using the sewing machine to do simple changes so you wear them again. "We live at a time when clothes are cheap, when buying the fabric to make a garment is more expensive than buying finished garments. We have a surplus of garments dying in the back of the wardrobe and they can be the material by which we learn and cultivate skills. You can get quick results, and if you are not too handy and little bit impatient, you can still do something within two hours."

The transformation of clothing and the transformation of self are connected. The psychology of clothing, the journeys we take with garments, the dreams and aspirations we put in them are important. "What has frustrated me a lot around the sustainability discussion these days and the rise of fast fashion and ultra-fast fashion, whatever we're going to call continuous acceleration of consumption, is that we need to address it yes, but it has become this thing that we just blame for everything that is wrong. "A lot of people do not have much agency in their lives. Our squeezed economy means people work two or three jobs and what we call fast fashion is their way to gain a sense of agency and feel that they can get out of their work uniforms and into clothes of their own choice on Friday night and go out and meet people. This gives a sense of control of yourself and feel that they are the authors of their own lives. He says sustainability advocates who say they are done with fashion are preaching down to people who want to use fashion on their way up. You know, we tend to moralize. We talk about authenticity and inheriting some of these wholesome values. But it's easy to say when you are in a different position and have a sense of agency in your life.

"I feel we need to not only be talking about fast fashion and the problems there, we also need to look at the real problem that has to do with influence. This is double, double squeeze." At the same time as we see Vogue have a little thing about sustainability there is worship of rich and famous people who buy (or are given) couture that is sustainable because it is high quality.

Listen YouTube https://youtu.be/eHjg_sLajVM

23. Melanie Falick

In each chapter of her book *making a Life*, Melanie Falick profiles makers and shares ideas about what we stand to gain from making by hand. There's the remembering of our heritage and what it feels like to play, slowing down, joining hands through community and connection, making a home, finding a voice. Melanie @melaniefalick who lives in the Hudson Valley, upstate New York, believes creative expression and making things connects us to our survival. "I feel right, at home in my body, as I learn the skills I need to know to grow food and make clothes, when I develop self-reliance and competence. I am not going off grid and don't feel I need to know and do it all. But I feel better and better with each new skill I learn. "Understanding how things are made is important. Fast fashion -- the idea that clothes are not meant to last and are meant to go out of style -- makes no sense. It ends up being dissatisfying to buy and toss a dress and have a new one arrive in a box at our doorsteps the next day. Retail therapy is a band aid that never heals us. "Compare that to the

challenge, joy, struggle and pleasure of knowing I am wearing hand-stitched garments with strong seams because I made them that way. It feels good on the inside and that reflects on the outside. I feel happy. “We spend so much time looking for answers outside ourselves. We are encouraged to form our identity by what we buy, this designer, that aesthetic. I like to be exposed to outside influences, then look inward and do what makes sense for me. That means making something that suits my personality and fits my body, which doesn’t match standard sizing. Melanie feels involved in about half her wardrobe and becoming more so. She also likes to make for her home, including pottery and textiles. Her social life is oriented around being with makers. She’s slowly working on her next book about her personal making practice and the role handwork plays in our culture today. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/ILgmaTbzUfw>

24. Katrina Rodabaugh

Redesigning second-hand clothing is the magic part of Katrina Rodabaugh’s wardrobe when she takes clothes that already exist and envisages how to reshape them to suit her aesthetic. Katrina says it is satisfying to reclaim the garment by inserting herself into the design process, to repair or fix, or add handwork by stitching or dyeing. It is quiet work that is forgiving of interruption and returns a sense of ease. It goes to the heart of how we understand and define value. “When you are enhancing or prolonging the life of a garment by patching or mending, the garment will stay with you for longer because you are invested in it.” It helps us appreciate the lifecycle of garments, how they come into our life and how they leave. And in turn this deepens our connection to the other cycles of life, including the essentials of food and water. Creativity is an ingrained part of Katrina’s life. She went to college for environmental studies and writing, then worked for arts organizations in San Francisco and did a masters in creative writing. When a college professor called her a fibre artist that was the pivotal moment she leaned into which ultimately led to her creative practice around slow fashion advocacy. In April 2013, the Rana Plaza factory collapsed and in August she committed to her *Make Thrift Mend* project that has evolved into a business based on these principles. “For the first year it was a personal art project. I had been an environmentalist since I was like 17 and sustainability has always been really important to me personally but I hadn’t thought about it systemically. “*Make Thrift Mend* was a way for me to engage in what’s called social practice but now it is the center of my studio practice. I fell in love with it because it brought all these components together. There was the writing, the fiber art, the sustainability, and the social side from teaching and engaging. I started focusing on the natural fibers, or let’s say biodegradable fibers, and when we moved here (upstate New York) and we have regional wool which I can dye and knit with. “I still do some handmade garments but the bulk of my wardrobe I redesign, mending and dyeing mostly, and patching and stitching. A really high percentage of my wardrobe is factory-made secondhand clothes that I have redesigned with dyes, stitched or cut up.” I had a magic day with Katrina in which we dyed and stitched and chatted, and lunched, in what was a lived experience of my Churchill Fellowship study that being more hands-on with our clothes helps reduce waste and enhances wellbeing. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/IO7rB6Cq2WM>

25. Cal Patch

Cal Patch has a superpower and it is helping people use their own body measurements to make simple patterns and clothes that uniquely suit themselves. Cal @hodgepodgefarm trained and worked as a fashion designer in her dream job with Urban Outfitters before opening a shop, running a craft school and now independently teaching crochet, embroidery and sewing. Her current teaching practice, based out of her Kerhonkson studio in upstate New York, is the antithesis of how she was taught in college, which was to fit size 6 sample bodies using slopers (or blocks) to make runway clothes she considered ridiculous. “I wanted to make real clothes that fit actual people’s bodies but I realised we weren’t taught to make them at college. So I took my body measurements

and invented my own way of making creative interesting clothes that are also functional. Many people want an alternative to store-bought clothes but they don't know how to go about it. Cal says the things that make clothes interesting are the details that can be added to simply shaped patterns that are not complicated. "In teaching people to sew, I found the pattern is the biggest obstacle so I developed a way to plot your own measurements and develop your own pattern. It is actually easier to do it this way that adjust a graded pattern to fit your body. "I've been teaching this for 22 years, it is my calling and I love it. It is not nearly as hard as people think to make your own clothes and it makes sense when you start with your own measurements. Personally, Cal says 90 percent of the clothes she wears are made from scratch and all drafted from her own measurements and the rest are old things she's attached to. They're all natural fibres because she can't bear synthetics. Making is essential to her mental health. "I can't imagine not doing stitching every night. It is an essential part of day." Mending is absolutely helpful for her wellbeing. "I started doing it because of samples that had been cut and I mended them. I am not a prolific maker and my handmade wardrobe is not a huge number of pieces, so mending becomes part of it. I get emotionally attached to clothes. I love them more the longer they are worn. I am thrilled with the movement towards mending, to keeping clothes going. By adding creativity and interest, personally I find I like these clothes even more. " It was wonderful to meet Cal in her Kerhonkson studio for my Churchill Fellowship, to join the dots on my measurements and create a dress pattern, and chat about her personal approach to clothes which you can hear more about over on Jane Milburn YouTube <https://youtu.be/RbLp-RsHS5k>

26. Brece Honeycutt

Brece Honeycutt is a sculptor and textile artist based at Sheffield in the Berkshires who works with paper and cloth, and has splendid collections in her studio that connect with the natural world. "Artists are not that different to scientists, they have an idea and set about proving their theory. I asked myself why do I need to make objects? I decided to be more selective and move away from physical pieces and towards making aware through nature tours. Making people aware, rather than making more things, has become a focus of Brece's work as she herself became aware of all the things she has thrifted and gathered in her studio space. As an art history student in college, Brece was discouraged from working with textiles because of social pressure that perceive them as domestic and female craft not art. Her mother and grandmother had made their own clothes, but it wasn't until a friend introduced Brece to Alabama Chanin hand-sewn clothes in 2004 that she took a workshop and began making her own. Now she thrifts or makes all her own clothes. She knits her wool socks, makes Alabama Chanin pieces, mends jeans, eco dyes, overprints and redyes. "When you make your own clothes, you realise the value and how many hours it takes to make things. If you just buy clothes at a big box store, their price does not reflect the proper cost of labour and materials. I want to wear clothes that fit my body, and real fibres not plastic ones. "Thrifting is a way of afford things I couldn't buy otherwise, and it is sustainable because the things are already in existence. I want quality fibres because the feel of the fabric matters. I make to get clothes that work with my body shape and make me feel good when I wear them. Because of COVID, I haven't bought or shopped for two years, and have realised I don't need any more and I don't want to shop for anything, except books but I mostly use the library. Brece says being hands-on with clothes is good for her personal wellbeing. "It feels good to be able to say, oh I made that, or let's fix that. I mend my husband's jeans and people comment on the mends and they become aware that just because something has a hole in it doesn't mean you need to throw it out. Making aware is linked here that to, so we are starting conversations about dye pollution and waste." "Using my hands is an important part of it. My hands are never idle, always stitching and mending. When in the studio writing, reading and researching that uses brain power, and I need to get my hands in something to balance that so I have stitching projects that use a different energy from reading. Stitching is not

mindless but it takes the brain to a different energy, almost meditative, quiet, slow, a deliberate stepping back for processing time.’ Listen on YouTube <https://youtu.be/-nv93Bp5whA>

27. Crispina ffrench

Crispina ffrench is a master upcycler who has used textile waste as raw material for more than three decades. Her parents were artists and teachers, and when Crispina was in art school her father suggested using wool sweaters as felt instead of felting from scratch. That sparked her creative business career, and Crispina has been upcycling that career ever since. She has evolved through running a thriving business selling products, to teaching upcycling, writing a book on upcycling, running community projects using upcycled waste, and now is mentoring others on how to build well-paid, sustainable textile waste businesses through her membership community Stitcherhood. She believes there is an infinity of wins in using our hands and waste textiles to make things, and connecting in this way proved vital during the pandemic. “The creative process is important for human survival. The added benefit of making from waste materials is we are nurturing the planet at the same time. I love working for myself, making things, making something that serves the planet, something that is useful for others and helps reduce waste materials. “I’m turning waste into money. There’s no negativity in what I do, it is all benefiting people and the planet, and there’s the opportunity to grow that through the Stitcherhood to serve and nurture others who are using waste materials too. “Using the right side of our brains has been scientifically proven to diminish stress and anxiety, and build confidence and self-worth. Making is good for you because it nurtures your soul and puts you in flow. It is a sacred gift to create something from nothing, there’s an alchemic process in making dinner from your vegetable garden or a dress from old sweaters. Crispina’s personal wardrobe is selected for comfort, function, handmade-ness and reuse. She believes we gain confidence and self-worth when we wear clothes from ethical sources, when you know who made them or made them ourselves. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/R6ljn4ufx6U>

28. Kathryn Greenwood Swanson

Kathryn Greenwood Swanson has created a place where materials flow across households and generations enabling fabric stashes to find their way from attics into the sunlight of new life. Swanson’s Fabrics in Montague, Massachusetts, is not just a reuse fabric store, it is an affordable way to get people sewing again so they enjoy self-sufficiency gains through skills and making cool things to wear. “Really friendly people bring me their special things, there are tears shed and stories told. There’s a lot of stuff in attics and basements, and we are able to keep it moving. “My store is a win, win, win for everyone involved. It is a win for people who are donating and wanting to pass good stuff on to the next generation, a win for people who can buy affordably, and a win for the environment. Kathryn is operating in the gift economy, with an abundance not scarcity model, because she wants people to feel the empowerment that comes from making their own clothes that work with their size, proportions and gender expression. “To wear your own custom has to be better and more valuable than other stuff. The real value is in the coolness, and it is harder to get rid of items that you have worked on so you need fewer of them. “It is dehumanising to change clothes often, you forget who you are. We’re making it cool to become capable, to manipulate things around you and refresh your own stuff. “We are trash rich, finding supplies is not the problem, being capable is what is missing. Kathryn teaches skills including braided-in rug making which everyone can bond with. She has free fabric for children in her shop, because using scissors, knots and glue is a good place to start. “I think the more that we can understand that these objects are really difficult to make. And that is humans who make them, those very simple truths should hopefully help a person reduce how liberal they are with allowing clothes to come in and out of their life. And I believe that you can’t teach people well about clothing and about fabrics and textiles without teaching them what it takes. “So by promoting, reuse and promoting becoming capable of sewing and learning how

to mend and tailor and alter, it just gives an individual a much deeper perspective on how many systems are in place and how complex they must be for a \$3 t-shirt to get to you at Walmart and outrageously nonsensical that all is.” “We are built for fibre arts ...it is not that fibre arts are good therapy, it is that being separated from fibre arts is un-therapeutic ... a fidget spinner used to be a drop spindle.” Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/JEa8YG1M8S8>

29. Louisa Owen Sonstroem

Our hands have the power to make the clothes in which we live, says Louisa Owen Sonstroem. Louisa @louisawensonstroem bubbles with the excitement, joy and knowledge of planning, making and wearing modern clothes that she sews by hand and the love of sharing this experience with others. Trading as Louisa Merry, she says hand stitching slows down the making process in empowering and radical ways, which she outlines in her self-published book *Hand Sewing Clothing: a guide* and shares in online workshops. Her book includes essays, basic skills such as how to use a thimble and a multitude of stitches, seams and applied skills. “It is really empowering to be able to take raw materials and turn them into something you can live in. “I love showing people how to make directly for themselves. You are not limited to the shapes, sizes, colours and fabrics prescribed to you in stores and that, again, is empowering. You are not playing a passive part in dressing, but making all the choices and knowing how to realise them into clothes. Louisa says the fashion industry is making a mess of the planet and exploiting people in doing so, but even when you make your own garments there is still a need to be strategic about the resources and processes used. “For me, hand-sewing feels comfortable because I am making clothes slowly, accumulating them slowly and thinking about the materials I am choosing. I sew with natural fibres, and used fabric when possible, trying to be careful with the fit so what I make will be worn, repaired and have a long life. Apart from being exciting, stimulating, satisfying and fulfilling, Louisa says the benefits of sewing by hand include that it is slow and portable, affordable, independent from electricity and machine problems, provides you with agency and ownership of the creative process, you can create original clothes, can easily control the material and have precision. We chatted and stitched in the park overlooking the lake at UCONN in Storrs, Connecticut, then Louisa showed me her favourite weeping willow tree. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/e5Lf2200aqk>

30. Amy DuFault

For decades Amy DuFault was writing and representing sustainable fashion but the other-worldly excess of runways and fashion weeks are now in her past because her future is grounded in regenerative textiles and colours. Amy believes our clothes tell the story of who we are without us saying a word and wrote about this in a street-style blog about creating unique style for Ecosalon in the 2000s. Even earlier, growing up in Massachusetts, Amy remembers older family members working in textile mills, in knitting and weaving mills in New Bedford and Fall River, and her goal now is to reconnect the local growing of regenerative fibres through to milling and making the clothes we wear. She runs the South East New England Fibershed and recently published *A Toolkit for Fibersheds and Brands: creating a conversation for a new era of design*. “There's still such a disconnect about where things come from because in the city there's distance from nature itself. They try to use technology to make amends to the planet, to recycle plastic, but that's not the solution. The solution is working with the soil, working with the farmers, keeping farmers on the land so we can have fiber that's made from plants or animals.” Amy says there's a lot of talk about sustainable fashion, but still not much action. Involving farmers, garment workers and young people in the conversations about sustainable fashion is the only way it can progress beyond talk. “I'm always the wildcard on panels I'm asked to be on. ‘Do you want to hear the truth? Or the pretty?’ I am at a point in my life where I don't owe anybody anything. I'm an independent contractor. My voice and my feelings are my own. So I say what I have to say.” She believes certifications should be

paid by brands not farmers. “Farmers are not going to do any of the stuff that brands want them to do without money behind it. They're tired of putting themselves out there for the brands and the brands don't put themselves out there at all.” Amy has been exploring natural color through her work with Botanical Colors and backyard experiments with flowers, leaves, bark and stems. “I feel like I came into being creative when I started doing natural dyeing. I'm not perfect at it but I love the idea of getting colour on things. Almost everything has color and everybody loves color. “I use clothes as my canvas now. Like the art supply store, I go to Goodwill, and I get lots of things that are white in designs I like. And then I change them into a different color. I just don't think we need to buy new clothes all the time to be expressive. “Almost 100% of my wardrobe is thrifted and modified. I only buy used clothing now. It almost feels weird to go into a new clothes store and look at a rack. “I'm proud to wear things and have people say ‘what a cool color’, or ‘it's an awesome dress, where'd you get that?’ I say I got it for \$4 at Goodwill and I dyed it with flowers from my garden. It's like an invitation to learn more. The clothes themselves become activists, you know, these loudspeakers.” Listen here <https://youtu.be/1Cjdm4cZ38>

31. Jessamy Kilcollins

Jessamy Kilcollins has a library of clothes at her fingertips as co-owner of High Energy Vintage in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She gathers, curates and mends them for the shop using period appropriate materials to give integrity. But in her personal wardrobe, Jessamy sews clothes that fit her own body shape. “I am busty and found shopping always makes you feel bad about yourself. We're expected to fit into homogenised shapes which seems counter-intuitive. We blame our bodies for not fitting into ready-to-wear clothes but when you make for yourself, you can tailor clothes to make you feel good. All my busty friends sew.” Her clothes are beautiful, interesting and satisfying to wear. They enable self-expression, portraying who she is, and what's important. She saves time shopping in person and saves the environmental footprint of online returns when things don't fit. Jessamy studied fine arts and design and later took a sustainable fashion course which she now applies through her work which includes teaching mending at Cambridge Library and developing an Amended garment range using fabric collage and stitching. From a sewing for wellbeing perspective, Jessamy said: “I feel most myself when I am sewing something. It feels good, it feels like I am doing what I am supposed to be doing. I feel unbalanced if I have no studio time.” She says there's a growing appetite for learning the skills of sewing because people are realising these are empowering life skills. Mending is not only useful, it establishes connection to our garments. “It makes sense to extend the life of garments that are already here. They are often higher quality than new clothes and more often natural fibres that are easier to mend and more comfortable to wear. “Showing people the value in extending the life of garments is important. New Englanders are practical, we make do and mend things. Our grandparents' generation used what was there before buying new and it is good to see more young college kids now getting into thrifting.” Listen here <https://youtu.be/jp2S9HS98e4>

32. Amy Lou Stein

Amy Lou Stein said that she makes things all the time because it brings her joy. She's the person who doesn't leave home without a project to work with her hands. “It's something that really grounds me. I just love making things and I'm always kind of trying to up my game and learn a new technique or a new thing or a new way to repurpose or reuse something. “I really love when I find an article of clothing that I can make better. There is a lot of white or beige or pale coloured clothes in the thrift stores and you can wear it like it is, or repurpose and reuse it, mend the hole in it or throw it in the compost.” “I really love clothes, new, old, used, expensive or cheap, I love them. I do not necessarily love fashion, but I really love things that my friends have made or patterns that my friends have made, that brings me a little bit more joy.” Amy Lou attributes her good friend Cal Patch for teaching

her, and many others, about the life-changing opportunity to make clothes that fit their own bodies. “When I wear something I made with Cal, I always think of her and that makes me really happy. And if I wear a dress that she made, I also feel very good.” As someone who loves crochet, Amy Lou finds it soul crushing walking into stores such as Target and seeing crocheted baby clothing or kid's clothing or adult crocheted dresses because there's no machine for crochet and they are not appropriately priced considering the work involved. “Craft is not fast, you have to embrace the relationship that you have with the objects you're working with. And be happy with slow, slow is actually good for us.” I chatted with Amy Lou at her Craftworks Somerville studio, listen here <https://youtu.be/-Qwt3fWJWnA>

33. Betsy Greer

Betsy Greer, *right*, linked craft and activism into craftivism when she started knitting more than two decades ago and recognized it as a way of connecting to self and others, finding voice and joy, and telling your full story. She discovered a global community of people, in the past and present, with stories about using craft as a way to process heavy feelings and speak out, and this evolved into her 2014 book *Craftivism: the Art and craft of activism*. “Woven through this was also me, dealing with depression



and anxiety, and then going to therapy for that, and then realizing in time that my craft practice was me finding my voice after assault, and finding my own joy.” “So craftivism for me over time has morphed into a way of showing up for yourself and telling your full story of who you are, or where you want to go or hope to go. It is using craft as a vehicle for transformation of yourself. “Making helps me regulate my emotions, it helps me regulate my breathing and helps me find time for myself ... there's a self-care aspect to it. I noticed a photo of Betsy jumping for joy in a dress she made for herself and asked her about that. “I just started my very first dress on my own, which was a very exciting and empowering ... the fact that you can choose to make something in a color that you want, in a pattern that you want, is empowering, because you're showing up fully as who you are, versus putting on the clothes that someone else decided was worthy of sale. From her work in the labour industry, Betsy believes consumers have to bring on the changes in the fashion industry because most businesses won't. “We are the problem, if we are buying trendy things, buying things to have multiple wardrobes.” We may be the problem but we are the solution too, through choices we make to be more responsible in our purchasing habits. I chatted with Betsy via zoom, listen here https://youtu.be/38ora_ayOmA

34. Virginia Johnston

In this digital age Virginia Johnson believes people are gravitating to making wearables with their hands so they have something tactile and tangible, and a felt sense of accomplishment. Virginia runs a yarn and fabric store Gather Here in Cambridge, Massachusetts with dedicated classroom spaces and machines and finds the most popular class is sewing basics which are offered every week. Another popular class is basic alterations of clothes from deep in people's closets or local thrift stores and turning them into something they want to wear. “We talk about what drew you to the

garment? Was it the fabric or the style? What is it about it that you're not wearing it now? How can we give it new life? "It's a fascinating process because people then really have to think about their consumption. And when you learn to sew, you infuse value into the thing that you've made. And when you suddenly value the labour, it also makes you a more conscious consumer. "Something that I stress in my sewing classes is that it's process over perfection. I tell people all the time, what we're making when we make our first dress or first pair of pyjama pants is you're not making something that goes into an art gallery ... you can embrace those imperfections that make this thing that you've created incredibly unique to you. "I hope that people will pay more attention to what they're buying, and how much they need. I think it's important also to have these very honest conversations about fashion and consumption with our friends and our families. I think that it's so easy to make these decisions in isolation. But what I love about having a community at Gather Here is that we talk about the cost of consumption and what we're buying and how we wear it every single day. Virginia is also a costume designer for film and television who always dresses brightly in big bold patterns. "It's a way for me as a Filipina American woman, in a primarily woman-focused field of sewing and costuming, to take up space. I want people to recognize me as an expert in colour and texture. And hear me when I share my thoughts on character and how people dress. I don't want to be a wallflower." She believes carving out time to make is important for empowerment. "It's so important that we find the joy in craft so that we can do the harder things ... to continue making phone calls, writing letters and having difficult conversations with people about assault weapons in the United States." Listen here <https://youtu.be/bzhFD--Z-A0>

35. Dr Sass Brown

We need a culture shift away from consumption to redefine our values and how we measure success, says fashion academic Dr Sass Brown author of *Eco Fashion* and *Refashioned*. She says many people are aware of the negative impacts of the fashion industry – waste, pollution, impacts on people in the supply chain making culture a really important word in the conversation about sustainable change. "We've been in a culture in the West where consumerism and how much stuff you own, and the value of that stuff, and whether that stuff is the latest model, the highest fashion, the most prestigious brand, and that's a huge problem that we have to address." "This is a very complicated, multi-layered problem that we have with fashion and the interconnected processes that textiles and garments go through. So there is no Nirvana, there's no perfect solution. There are however lots of ways of doing better and doing more." From a personal perspective, Sass has a sense of accomplishment in finding creative means of maintaining clothes she's loved as they age. "There's definitely a meditative process, to crafting, to mending and taking care of things." Sass has just written a new master's program for Kingston University London on sustainable fashion, business and practices – focused on the system of fashion as opposed to producing new product.

She is influencing a new generation to make systemic change instead of individual interventions to deal with sustainability issues in the fashion industry. For my Churchill Fellowship, I chatted with Sass about the outputs from her students, about industry issues, and how being hands-on with her own wardrobe is helpful for reducing waste and enhancing wellbeing. Listen YouTube https://youtu.be/Cs_sZ4Zu42o

36. Katherine Soucie

Katherine Soucie @sanssoucie believes in MENDing as a systems approach for redesigning in a sustainable world using waste as the resource. "During my master's degree, I came up with using the word MEND, which broken down stands for Method, Evaluate, Navigate and Design as a reflective design tool and I'll be exploring this through my PhD research on upcycling and material activism." "I've been working with this one material resource of waste hosiery but there is the potential for

MEND to be used in other areas of design education, even with obsolete machinery and digital processes, as a way to reimagine UK manufacturing.” “When we think about localism and bringing agency to materials that already exist, which is at the heart of what I do, I believe we need to be working with existing materials rather than manufacturing new materials. It's about resource preservation and craft preservation.” Katherine’s journey into textiles and fashion began in childhood in Ontario as a way of culturally identifying her heritage from a British mother and French Canadian and First Nations father. This exploration of expressing herself through clothing led to fashion studies in the ‘90s, when she was told she couldn’t work with second-hand clothing, before doing textile studies in Vancouver and a design career reprocessing waste as a resource. From a personal perspective, Katherine believes clothing and colours have an ability to empower us from the inside, and having a good relationship with it is important for wellbeing. “Our health and wellbeing has been so forgotten when it comes to the making of clothing and designing for the future requires a more mindful approach.” I chatted with Katherine at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London listen here YouTube <https://youtu.be/yQa1Q0vZfeQ>

37. Barley Massey

A low-impact way of life in Snowdonia in north Wales growing up with crafty grandmothers who taught her to sew and knit at a young age set Barley Massey on a pathway for her business and studio practice based around upcycled textiles. After doing an arts foundation course and further study in textiles, Barley honed in on upcycling as a way to utilise surplus clothing and textiles, share skills and spark conversations about creative reuse of existing materials. It was more than two decades ago that Barley established Fabrications Hackney on Broadway Market, East London, to focus on social textiles, upcycling and eco design through her shop, studio and classes. “Twenty-two years on, our aim is still to inspire a joy of making while encouraging thoughtful and resourceful ways of living in a welcoming and creative environment.” Barley has shared skills and knowledge by working with lots of different community groups, educational organizations, galleries, festivals, and the Love your clothes campaign in the UK. “Before COVID, I went around most of the London boroughs teaching sewing skills because they had identified that a lot of people were not having the opportunity to learn even basic skills such as sewing on a button or fixing a hem was one of the causes for a lot of our clothing waste.” Barley says that during lockdown many people took up sewing, particularly hand-sewing as a way to keep calm at a time of uncertainty, using needle and thread as a therapeutic and mindful way of slowing down. It is also a way to cultivate concentration and attention, and presence and patience, which then filters through into daily life in other ways. She says being able to use hand-sewing skills to mend your clothes not only makes them last longer, it gives people a sense of pride in feeling more connected and emotionally attached to their garments. I chatted with Barley in her studio space at Fabrications Hackney, listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/8z111y7GBbA>

38. Ros Studd

A desire to fill the intergenerational gap in core mending skills across society motivated Ros Studd to set up Repair What You Wear as an online platform sharing free hand-mending tutorials and teacher-training resources. With a background of textile studies, retail management and education, Ros and colleague Elahe Alavi, developed a model of teaching that enables people to mend 75 percent of their clothing with just five core skills learned in 90 minutes. “The nuts and bolts of mending are threading a needle, learning how to secure it, backstitch, and ladder-stitch, and when you have these core skills you can mend most stuff.” “We have made these resources free because in the past you learned these things for free and we want to contribute to society by perpetuating skills and knowledge about wearing and caring for clothes in an environmentally sustainable way. Ros says @repair_what_you_wear is a legacy project teaching skills sometimes overlooked and

often diminished in contemporary and technologically-driven families, schools and education systems. “This life skills’ material around clothing care can slot into the curriculum of skills for work and future careers programs because it cuts across sustainability, budgeting, fibre science, social enterprise, business development, waste management and more. The resources are available on repairwhatyouwear.com under core skills, with pdf downloads of written instructions for right and left-handed people. “If you choose to teach or run repair cafes or are in a school, you can take the materials from the website, download them, print them and replicate them in anyway. We don't capture details, and we don't mark it. It's a free, freely available resource for community benefit.” “Knowledge is empowering and feeling confident about your decision-making in your wardrobe gives you a feeling of being more in control of your life which is good for mental health. And obviously you can get pleasure and relaxation out of the process of mending itself. “On the questions of clothes washing, Ros uses a simple old-fashioned technique of the smell test. “If it smells, it needs washing if it's dirty, it needs washing, and spot clean whenever you can.” Listen here YouTube <https://youtu.be/FiWdN51QSOM>

39. Ellie Alavi

Wearing and valuing the memories in clothing passed down from her mother and grandmother is one of the ways Elahe (Ellie) Alavi chooses to dress sustainably. Now living in Aberdeen, Scotland, Ellie is originally from Iran and was shocked by the culture of consumption so different to her own more practical approach. Ellie’s interest in reuse led her to do a local sewing class with Ros Studd and now she contributes graphic design and web skills to the Repair What You Wear project. Ellie was drawn to the project as a way to fight waste because she believes the missing life skills of mending clothes means people are buying more than they need to. “It's interesting to see how a younger generation can learn these skills as another way to help save the environment.” “I could see that people just race to buy, or just throw away clothing, because they cannot mend what they have. So by helping pass on skills and a bit of knowledge that is a way forward.” In buying things for her own wardrobe, Ellie looks at labels and tries to buy better quality and keep for longer. She enjoys mending and changing the style of clothes in little ways, and feels the power of that. “I use and reuse items that I have, mix and match them together. I am not a big fan of buying more and I like working with whatever I have.” I chatted with Ellie about her pathway into creativity and involvement with repairwhatyouwear.com in Aberdeen for my Churchill Fellowship about being hands-on with clothes as a way to reduce waste and enhance wellbeing. <https://youtu.be/QbR9Zdz8KB8>

40. Mary Morton

Mary Morton spent her professional life as a pharmacist in efficient, mild-mannered service in Inverness, Scotland, but is now a committed activist after educating herself about anthropogenic climate change at the encouragement of her son, an engineer. Now living in Edinburgh, Mary has made significant changes to her diet and lifestyle, agitates for change including through Extinction Rebellion, and volunteers with the sewing group at Shrub Zero Waste Hub to help others reduce their impact. Mary learned to sew from her grandmother and did some dressmaking in her teenage years when clothes were expensive and making things was a cheaper way of achieving wardrobe requirements. Dressmaking went on the backburner during her professional life but she still did a lot of mending and repair work. Her activist work includes going along on Friday mornings to the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh supporting young people bringing attention to the need for more climate action to ensure a viable future for the planet. Mary knitted a scarf in yarn of various colours that becomes a visual representation of the global average temperature each year from 1919 to 2018. “It works its way through various colour changes to be quite red and horrendous at the end. When I was knitting it, I felt OK until it started to get redder and it was quite stressful at the end because it was such a strong message about temperature change. “How can we possibly be ignoring

this, as a country and as a government, how can we not be doing more?" Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/CsNOCxXlzYs>

41. Sophie Burgess

Sustainability considerations motivate Sophie Burgess in all aspects of her life, including personal clothing decisions and professional work as an architect. She grew up in a creative environment in London with parents who exposed her to art galleries and exhibitions, as well as DIY hands-on craft including sewing. About four years ago Sophie took a pledge to stop buying new clothes and now enjoys the creativity that springs from charity shopping and adapting what she finds. This is motivated by concern about climate change and lowering her consumption, and finds that the limitations are bringing creative rewards. "I am finding my own style. I like having different styles every day and being able to mix it up and enjoying vintage clothes as well." She is pleased to now be independent and individual in what she wears, considering the insecurities that buying into fast fashion trends often causes for teenagers. Using items to their full potential, and sometimes beyond it, is Sophie's thing. At the Shrub sewing session Sophie with Mary was embellishing the cuffs of a 1980s hand-me-down denim jacket from her mum using blanket stitch. "I've worn the jacket so much that the cuffs are wearing out so I was taught this blanket stitch which I'm doing to repair the cuffs and add a bit of colour. I'm really happy with how it's turning out. And hopefully it will stop wearing out so I can wear it even longer." Listen YouTube https://youtu.be/r7R_Yg9_ic8

42. Jamie Renwick

Jamie Renwick felt a bit of Zen when he learned to mend his jeans at a Shrub Zero Waste Hub sewing session and he's pleased to have the practical skills to do more mending in future. He started thrifting as a university student for the style choices it offered but now does it as a way to reduce the impact of his clothing. After studying business management, Jamie is now helping out at Shrub and enjoying the opportunity to make positive change in the world. I chatted with Jamie after he'd mended his jeans with guidance from sewing volunteer Helena. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/nD4rNCz4zME>

43. Helena Catt

Helena Catt delights in the creative problem-solving and variety that is possible by using craft skills to adapt clothes to suit herself. Helena @helena_catt grew up in Scotland at a time when her mum made their clothes, they learned to sew as kids and made gifts for grandparents. She sewed as a student and young adult but stopped a few decades ago, at the point when buying fabric became more expensive than buying clothes. After a career as an academic, political scientist and consultant in the Pacific and other regions, Helena has retired in Scotland and volunteers her sewing and crafting skills at Shrub in Edinburgh. Now her approach is to alter clothes without using patterns and engaging creative craft techniques to change collars, or cut and knit on to the garments. And while Helena always mended things, she remembers the wow moment of seeing visible mending as a way to add creativity and colour to otherwise dull garments. "When I get bored with my clothes, I go into the box of those I'm not wearing, choose something and work out how to alter it. That way I get new things without buying things." "I like the problem-solving and bricolage components of altering. With visible mending, you choose from what you have got rather than matching a colour. I use charity shops as a material source and my stash as a wardrobe. "I use what I have and like that I can do it, to make it yours and how you like it. That way you are not looking like everyone else, while being creative and having wow moments. "Creativity is important for mental wellbeing, being creative makes me feel better. I notice if I haven't done anything creative for a while." Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/gmCOxPiHQQ>

44. Sally Cook

Sally Cooke, *right*, is a lifelong sewist and now PhD researcher studying the experiences of people who are learning to sew clothes for themselves. The context for the work is fashion sustainability and the ethical and environmental drivers for re-thinking relationships with clothes. “I feel really lucky that I have always been able to sew, having learnt as a child. It wasn’t a common skill amongst my friends growing up and it is now passed on even less at home and at school in the UK than it once was.



“Knowing what we now know about the environmental impact of the fashion industry, I am more aware than ever that being able to sew gives me choice. So I am interested in how other people who want to make their own clothes are encountering this now.” The online craft revival, the indie sewing pattern revolution and programs like the Great British Sewing Bee mean there is enormous interest in home sewing at the moment. “The people who took part in my research were all sewing beginners inspired to try making their own clothes for different reasons. They recorded their sewing activities in short film clips and written diaries before sharing their experiences with me as we watched their video clips together. “There are highs and lows in these making experiences, with enjoyment, excitement and increasing sewing confidence also tinged with anxiety about wasting time and materials, and frustration when things went wrong. “I am interested in what the experiences of amateur sewists can tell us that is useful in re-thinking clothing sustainability issues and perhaps reframing sewing skills as sustain-abilities – abilities that enable us to behave more sustainably. “I am increasingly convinced, thanks to the work of people like Kate Fletcher and my supervisor Amy Twigger Holroyd that the answer to the fashion sustainability problem does not reside within the current fashion model. This is all the more reason to look elsewhere, including amateur and past practices, for creative inspiration and a more grounded critical response. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/w1l6vsXt01c>

45. Andy Ogden

Andy Ogden is reviving cotton spinning in Manchester and in pursuit of radical transparency he is buying the cotton fiber direct from just two farming families, one in Queensland Australia and the other in California USA. Andy re-established English Fine Cottons in 2016 in the United Kingdom’s north-west, which was the world’s cotton manufacturing heartland in the 1900s. And while there are still thousands of cotton mills in the region, English Fine Cottons is the only one that includes spinning. At a time when globalisation and a lack of transparency continue to drive down clothing prices, often through exploitation of people and resources, Andy is focused on quality, sustainability, provenance and ethics. He said UK research had found the percentage of take-home pay of the average household spent on apparel and clothing hadn’t changed in 20 years, but the amount of goods that money bought has increased four-fold. “We’re buying four times the amount of rubbish for the same money.” We can only wear one pair of trousers at a time, so Andy believes we need to change buying habits to buy less of higher quality, which lasts longer and is something of which we can be proud. Buy a higher quality product that gives you 200 wears (the global average is only four wears) because you look after it. “That’s when you start to be able to put money into the entire

supply chain, to pay people properly, to automate and invest in the environment and in society.” Common sense, traditional values that are honest and responsible are the future of textiles. Listen here https://youtu.be/s_BqE-njjal

46. Claire Wellesley-Smith

Claire Wellesley-Smith sees the privilege in being able to carve out time each day to stitch as a way of sifting through her life. She has created a map of her thinking through making which unrolls like a scroll and reveals the stories of her textile journey in Shipley, near Bradford in west Yorkshire, the former heart of the wool textile industry in the United Kingdom. This stitch journal began in 2013 and records Claire’s daily practice of pausing and reflecting, perhaps only for 10 minutes or much longer when there is a lot of thought-processing to be done. Her two books, *Slow Stitch* and *Resilient Stitch* published by Batsford, are based around the stitching process which Claire absorbed almost by osmosis from her mother and grandmother who sewed for practical purposes. Claire gains wellbeing benefit from the focused activity of stitching, when the eye is drawn to a small area of cloth and a pattern is created through a generative process. “It’s an immense privilege for me to even carve 10 minutes out of my day to stitch in a kind of meaningless fashion. I’m not making something, I’m not cutting out 50 coats a day and having to stitch them together. This is absolute privilege.” On the other hand, a lot of Claire’s work is in community settings because she is passionate about providing opportunities for people to be engaged and share skills together. She believes sewing skills are massively useful because they give you agency over your own stuff, which can be a powerful thing. Claire is in the final stages of a PhD with The Open University with support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It includes experiences of post-industrial textile communities, including Bradford, and projects encouraging participants to engage in slow craft-based work as a reflection of resilience of participants and place. Listen here <https://youtu.be/blkr-tREMVA>

47. Thread Republic – Holly Carr and Julia Roebuck

Sewing is an essential life skill, say the entrepreneurial young women from Thread Republic who are bridging the gap in opportunities to learn, experiment and play through sewing. They believe wellbeing benefits from enjoyment of the process itself surpass the sense of achievement it offers along with creativity, sustainability and community. “We think it’s really important to nurture that sense of wellbeing from sewing and for young people to have the feeling of doing something for the joy of it, rather than some desired outcome.” “A brilliant way to celebrate that is through clothing that you can make especially for you. I always say to people it doesn’t matter what it looks like on the inside because it’s only for you. “That sense of expression, identity and connection to clothing can give us much joy. Some people are prohibited by the fear of not knowing those skills, thinking it’s really difficult, thinking they might never be able to do it. “That is why we are providing easy entry points for everybody, even if they only use the skills for mending.” The drive behind the collaborative social enterprise Thread Republic in Kirklees, west Yorkshire, in the United Kingdom, is to have a positive impact and make a difference. The four directors run small, local textile businesses of their own, and collaborate to develop offerings with their community. “As a social enterprise, we are building a platform for our own voices and work, as well as collectively enabling others in our local communities to take part, share and develop their own voice. “Our long term goal is to provide employment, volunteering and work experience opportunities for young people particularly, to welcome them in and give them the ability to participate in this space of circularity and sustainability and saving textiles. “We are building awareness into any group sessions by chatting about clothing habits, how we interact with clothing and build stronger, longer-lasting connections. It is not about less, it’s actually about more: more connection to garments, more stories, more creativity and more self-expression. I chatted with two directors Holly Carr (first speaker) and Julia Roebuck here <https://youtu.be/AkpV7knSKpw>

48. Katrina Barnish

Katrina Barnish from Sewing Café Lancaster made an awesome garment during lockdown, a knitted jumper made from local wool dyed in four different shades of colour from brambles gathered along the Lancaster canal. The garment she wears underneath once was old bedsheets which Katrina dyed with coreopsis and dipped in iron, while the bodice is eco printed with coreopsis flowers. She was inspired by Australian author of *Eco Colour* and *Second Skin* India Flint @prophet_of_bloom to look more closely at natural ways to colour and print on new and reclaimed cloth. Katrina has been a member of Sewing Café Lancaster for six years and she's particularly interested in natural dyeing and using plant pigments to upcycle clothes and textile resources. "It's a great technique for covering stains or creating completely fresh looks on clothing." Being part of the group has helped extend Katrina's skills and provided enjoyment by spending time with kindred spirits working to ensure textiles are used as sustainably as possible. While she once was a prolific shopper, which then transferred to being a prolific charity shopper, now Katrina enjoys slowing down the process by working and reworking her clothes. "It's so much more meaningful when you're wearing something that you've spent time on. When you are using local resources for colour and pigment and know every stage of the process, and the level of thought that goes into everything you make helps it be successful. Katrina was a special education teacher and is now applying the creativity and solution-focused approach from her teaching career in this social group working on sustainability in textiles. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/tpogqGuwZG8>

49. Sewing Café Lancaster – Victoria and Gina Frausin

Growing up in the Amazon and Andes regions of Colombia, South America, fostered a love of ecology and traditional communities which Victoria and Gina Frausin now apply to their advocacy around what we wear in the United Kingdom. Their concern for human rights' abuses, today and historically, and the environmental impacts of clothes have led them to use creative approaches to influence grassroots change for an ethical textile industry and regenerative textile practices through Sewing Café Lancaster. Gina is a biologist and creates videos for their YouTube channel while designer Victoria collaborates with universities and community groups to deliver projects, including the current one to spark conversation about waste and textiles at Lancaster's Gaia Festival of the Earth. The group hosts mending stations, Sew&Sow boxes (like little street libraries but share haberdashery and gardening stuff not books), street stitching, brochures and videos, produce bag and community banner-making sessions, and works with refugee groups and schools. The group even has a natural dyes' garden. Victoria says over-consumption is the key issue: there are simply too many clothes in the world "We know for some people, the shopping experience is important. It is like a hobby to go to different shops and buy every week or every month and have coffee and shop some more," Victoria said. After waking up to fast fashion's social, environmental impacts, they now sew, tinker and experiment with garments they already own. The sisters have replaced the shopping hobby with a different, healthier one advocating for the environment and doing clothing maintenance. They've made a lovely group of friends within the sewing café and get social connection as well as understanding more about how clothes are made and sharing that awareness with the view to changing behaviours. "We understand it is a privilege being able to have the awareness, the time and the freedom to do what we do and achieve what we have achieved." Greenwashing is on their radar and the Beer and Yarn sessions they do at a local pub is a way to educate young people about the many claims from brands that need more scrutiny. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/o1gOxQy5FNw>

50. Prof Kate Fletcher

There's so much common sense in the *Earth Logic* framework for fashion research and change developed by Professor Kate Fletcher and Dr Mathilda Tham. It is entirely logical to put Earth care at the centre of all fashion practices, but it is a radical departure from the current and dominant economic Growth Logic paradigm which sees governments encouraging spending sprees as the panacea. The researchers say their Earth Logic: fashion action research plan comes from a place of deep frustration, fear and sorrow. They say the fashion sector understands its ecological impacts but little is shifting, despite acceptance of the urgent need to address the climate crisis. "The ultra-fast fashion brand that's just popped into the market in the last six months came almost from nowhere. I wonder is it like the death throes of an injured beast? This is almost the last type of industry action until the sector begins to shift fundamentally to something entirely different." "Planetary limits ultimately demarcate all human activity ... when we realize we can't continue living as if we have four planets when we have one, then things will profoundly change ... the circular fashion model is just more of the same; the only solution is less stuff." Earth Logic requires learning on a massive scale. The core competencies of learning and unlearning are: confidence, creativity, community and ecological literacy. A key framework for grounding this learning is permaculture, based as it is on the ethics of Earth care, people care and fair share. I was delighted to meet Kate as part of my Churchill Fellowship because she known as the originator of the 'slow fashion' term, author of 10 books and hundreds of papers, and co-founder of the Union of Concerned Researchers in Fashion. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/7tF-hr1L6II>

51. Dr Carry Somers

Carrying out citizen science and social science investigations into the impacts of the textile industry is one of many projects led by co-founder of the global Fashion Revolution movement Carry Somers. In conjunction with local universities in the United Kingdom, Carry is looking at mud pollution in lake sediments from historic textile production as well as microfibers present in the water today that is shedding from clothes being washed. "The researchers washed and dried just eight lab coats, these were polyester cotton blends, and they got five milliliters of microfibers off them in just one wash and dry cycle," Carry said. "It is really interesting to see people engaging because once you start to see the problem, you understand, and once you start to understand, you can do something about it." Carry has always been focused on transparency, sustainability and fair trade in fashion, since beginning her own fashion brand Pachacuti and later initiating Fashion Revolution in 2013. "I've been banging on about transparency for a really long time, because I knew how essential it was for showing the impact on producers and on the environment. And when the Rana Plaza factory collapsed in Bangladesh, it was just really clear to me that there was no transparency." Fashion Revolution works across citizens' education and awareness raising, with policy makers, and carries out ground-breaking research such as its fashion transparency index and emissions. Carry said 15,000 different chemicals are used to make textiles and clothing, but few are disclosed. "We can ask brands what's in my clothes, and we can demand regulation from policymakers because publishing your manufacturing-restricted substances list should be required by law. So we know what chemicals are going into our water waterways and into our seas, affecting human health affecting our endocrine system and affecting our fertility. We know a lot of this is due to chemicals and a lot of these chemicals are found in our clothing." I chatted with Carry at Foxlowe Arts Centre, listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/yfUDJs0tZcY>

52. Dr Bridget Harvey

People's motivation to repair can range from having attachment to things, continuing a tradition, an entry point into making, seeking to understand, connecting to makers across the world,

sustainability, and saving things from landfill, says Dr Bridget Harvey. Bridget herself grew up in a DIY-oriented family that was always mending and tending things, sewing clothes, growing vegetables, reusing materials and seeing what could be done with scraps of things. This carried her into a PhD thesis in the grey zone around repair-making, upcycling, reuse, repair, recycling, looking at the political aspects of repair as a way of understanding and connecting us to how our things are produced. She said the recent rise in visible mending of clothes has been great for provoking conversations and developing a particular aesthetic or adding bespoke elements to a garment, but there is privilege associated with it. “It’s much easier to mend garments that are made from more expensive materials, like wool or pure cotton, denim or linen. And to wear visibly mended clothes, you have to be in a position to be able to do that. “There also can be some sensitivity around the association with poverty of wearing a lot of mended clothes, so there needs to be consideration of the feelings of the person who wears it, and the sort of social situations that the garments are presented in. “Other aspects of privilege associated with mending are the time it takes and the haberdashery stash it may require. “I’ve got needles, threads, scissors, different thicknesses of yarns, patches of scraps of material and things like that. If you don’t have that, that’s also an investment point where you’ve got to be able to go and get those things.” Bridget’s own wardrobe solutions are mostly buying secondhand and keeping it minimal. She buys new shoes and pants when needed, and adapts things she is given. “It’s a way of making things work for you and keeping things for the comfort value of wearing something you enjoy.” Bridget is encouraged by community projects where people are sharing their skills and their stashes, so others do not need to purchase or store them. In terms of mending clothing made from natural materials, Bridget wonders if part of our motivation is the interconnectedness to ourselves as natural beings and whether we are drawn to value and care for something that ages as we do. She says the hive of domestic mending brings it into conversations and encourages bigger brands to start, or continue, repair systems, but mending actions alone are never going to solve the textile waste issue. There are bigger issues at play, such as the volume of production and lifespan there’s a lot of different elements that come into textile waste. Repair is one solution, but it’s not the only solution. Listen YouTube <https://youtu.be/SeEd0HljhAo>

53. Betsan Corkill

Her physiotherapy background led Betsan Corkill, *right*, to connect the dots when a new role in craft publishing saw her overseeing Letters to the Editor, 99 percent of which referenced the therapeutic benefits of knitting and stitching. Betsan, from Bath in the United Kingdom, looked at the science and the deeper she looked, the more she appreciated craft could be important for wellbeing and managing some health symptoms. Initially when therapeutic knitting was dissed



as something only old women did, Betsan replaced the ‘k’ word with the medical mouthful of ‘bilateral rhythmic psychosocial intervention to manage pain’. Knitting is beneficial because of its rhythmic nature, because it requires both hands to co-ordinate, and because creativity is applied to

master it. The touch and texture of the knitting influences wellbeing, as does colour but to the lesser extent. It is highly portable, meaning it is available as a self-soothing tool in all settings. If done in a group, there can be social benefits too. Bestan says therapeutic knitting is best done in 20 to 30 minute intervals, then getting up and being physically active. It is having moments throughout the day when you bring yourself back into that state of safety, that state of embodied presence which brings your systems back to a healing state. It offers an alternative to traditional medication-based approaches to health and wellbeing. "There are a few psychologists and occupational therapists using it, but you can run a therapeutic knitting or stitching group on many different levels, even just as a social group." "Our grandmothers and great grandmothers used to gather together and talk over their knitting or mending and solve their problems. People don't do that as much these days. "When you're sitting side-by-side with somebody listening, and you're just in a conversation, there's something about the rhythmic automatic movement that encourages people to talk more freely, more equally. So it's a really good vehicle to use in a therapy group." Listen to Betsan talk about the therapeutic benefit of using our hands to make here <https://youtu.be/Q3YGjEIUWBQ>

54. Emma Friedlander-Collins

A lifetime of learning by playing with materials has led Emma Friedlander-Collins' to be sharing remaking ideas through @steelandstitch books, social media and influencing the next generation at the University of Brighton. Emma's creative adventures include non-traditional crochet hacking ideas which evolved into a masters in sustainable design and she's now working on a PhD while teaching fashion communication. Remaking is a way of using creative skills to sustainably interact with the material world through innovative material manipulation of clothes that already exist in our wardrobes. "It is a way of changing and altering garments by interacting with them, and then opening up to a wider conversation about other ways we can use the clothes we've already got." Emma uses this method of remaking with her fashion communication students and says "what's amazing is seeing the students have this epiphany moment. They're so used to buying stuff for nothing and getting rid of it, and we're saying no you're not allowed to do that here. They have to get really conceptual and engaged with the garments that are available." "We are helping them on a visual communication journey where they have to explore not just how to make things look pretty but what it means and the impact they have in the world. It gives them a sense of agency of not just be making something physically but influencing how all of us think about ourselves, and the world and our interactions." "My research is about how we carry on empowering people. If we know how to interact with our garments, if we feel confident enough to start interacting with them then we can remake our look and get the same feeling that we get from buying a new top without having to buy a new top." "I've got a lot of knowledge of what different sorts of materials do but it's all through trial and error. It makes me feel good to have a sense of agency over what I'm wearing or what's available to me." "We've got enough stuff in our lives already, we just need to start to interact with those materials. It's not complicated, that's the joyous thing, it is what we've been doing for generations. "We need lots of different life skills for us to feel confident working with what we've got. We need to become generalists again, rather than specialists." My wide-ranging chat with Emma is on YouTube https://youtu.be/mqVj_wNgO4w

55. Rachel Smith

Living resourcefully is at the heart of Rachel Smith's @cyclingrachel advocacy work which she applies in professional infrastructure planning work and in her personal life. Rachel had a life-changing year in 2014 when she didn't buy anything new or secondhand and has applied her *UnderSpent* learning and strategies ever since. "Consumerism is a psychological operation. From when we're born, we're bombarded with advertisements and marketing. We've been brainwashed and manipulated and conditioned all our lives to shop. "I call myself an ex-shopaholic now. For me, it's not about never

ever buying anything. It's about pausing. And then thinking, do I really want this? Do I really need it? "I wait 90 days, and then nine and a half times out of 10 I think why on earth did I even write that on my waiting or wanting list? The pause has completely changed my buying behaviour." Rachel has done behaviour change research that found people need a compelling reason, a strong motive and a burning desire to change their behaviour. When it's personal, it's urgent and they care enough, behaviour change happens. Rachel believes in spending money on experiences, and found making pottery was a hands-on experience that came with wellbeing benefits. "Because you were working with your hands, and you were not making direct eye contact because people were looking down at what they were doing, it was a great way for people share their stories more." In the wardrobe, Rachel keeps clothes for a long time, has a standard style for work, extends the time between washing, and moves clothes along if she is not wearing them. Rachel's pause before purchasing process is to ask:

1. Do I need it? Yes or No?
2. Did I need it before I saw it? Yes or No?
3. Do I already have something the same or similar?
4. Can I borrow or hire it from someone else?
5. Will I still love it and use it in 6-12 months' time?
6. If I was moving house, would I pack it or get rid of it?
7. Wait 90 days before making any purchase

Listen to my chat with Rachel on YouTube <https://youtu.be/lxnOPKnRyiA>

Photos, *below*, exploring London in June 2022, *left*, visiting the Churchill War Room and, *right*, the Natural History Museum where I am wearing a Sansoucie garment given to me by Katherine Soucie.



Appendix 3

[Permaculture in your Wardrobe](#) is an emerging new edge of the design system of permaculture, underpinned by the ethics of earth care, people care and fair share.

Permaculture IN YOUR WARDROBE



USE THE 12 PERMACULTURE DESIGN PRINCIPLES TO MANAGE YOUR CLOTHES III with Jane Milburn

<p>Observe & interact – STOP LOOK AND LISTEN</p> <p>Start here. Take stock of what you need for your body and stage of life. Notice quality and what feels right. Think about colours and styles that suit you. Consider where clothes come from and who makes them.</p> <p></p> <p>Catch & store energy – SAVE SOME FOR LATER</p> <p>Clothes have embedded energy: wear until they wear out. Pass clothes through generations, as holders of meaning and memories. Pack some away and refresh your wardrobe depending on mood and season.</p> <p></p> <p>Obtain a yield – EARN A HARVEST</p> <p>Cultivate your wardrobe like a garden, build it over years. You are responsible: curate it, care for it, trim it back and bring in new material when needed. Natural fibres improve with age; don't weed out prematurely.</p> <p></p> <p>Apply self-regulation & accept feedback – CHECK YOURSELF</p> <p>Press pause on consumption and reduce what you own. Have fewer clothes of better quality. Use gardening instead of shopping as a self-soothing tool. Make considered purchases, don't buy on impulse or specials.</p> <p></p>	<p>Use & value renewable resources & services – GO SELF-POWERED</p> <p>Choose natural fibres from carbon-fixing plants and animals, rather than synthetics derived from fossil fuels. Dry and refresh clothes in the sunshine. Learn how different fibres feel and hand-wash when required.</p> <p></p> <p>Produce no waste – NO SUCH THING AS WASTE</p> <p>Natural fibre clothes have an after-life: repurpose them into rags and rags, before composting to release organic matter, carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen. Use zero-waste patterns, reuse buttons and zips.</p> <p></p> <p>Design from patterns to details – BE A DESIGNER</p> <p>Develop your own style, don't follow fashion. Tinker your clothes, to make them work for you. Don't fight nature, work with your current size and shape. Experiment with what you have to create fresh combinations.</p> <p></p> <p>Integrate rather than segregate – WORK TOGETHER</p> <p>Have a circular wardrobe, pass clothes on as needs change. Plan clothing swap parties and styling sessions. Look back through history and learn from others. Find a community to share new skills and create together.</p> <p></p>	<p>Use small & slow solutions – KEEP IT SIMPLE</p> <p>Make clothes to suit yourself, engage a dressmaker, or have clothes made to order. Learn to spin and weave, mend and redesign. Grow and use natural colour. Have fewer clothes and wear them for longer. Store carefully and preserve from pests.</p> <p></p> <p>Use & value diversity – MIX IT UP</p> <p>Consider other ways of sourcing clothes, like renting and swapping. Mix and match, and pattern clash. Be individual and independent, do indie style. Understand different fibre attributes and fabric weights.</p> <p></p> <p>Use edges & value the marginal – THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX</p> <p>See opportunity in dormant clothing and textiles; there are no rules. When on shopping, visit all sections to find the treasure. Think of your wardrobe as a south-facing garden, be resourceful to make it work all year.</p> <p></p> <p>Creatively use & respond to change – GET CREATIVE</p> <p>Carry your clothes through life: adapt them when your body, mood, and needs change. Think of your clothes as ingredients for reuse: chop and change, lengthen or shorten, stitch and patch, or over-dye for fresh life.</p> <p></p>
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Permaculture references: growdoit.com.au | permacultureprinciples.com

textilebeat.com | [@textilebeat](#)

Design // @HelenKellyCreates

Appendix 4

Victoria Frausin said Sewing Café Lancaster was started as a part of Transition City Lancaster by Caroline Jackson (a current council leader) and Wendy Haslam in 2010. In 2014, Victoria found herself in the driver's seat and along with a few volunteers ran weekly sessions based on sustainability, mending and reusing, trial and error. They started mending at the pub, library and market sessions, and had parties to raise funds for the group and other community initiatives and let others know about their ethos, including films, talks, clothes swap, workshops. They are presently a core group of nine volunteers, plus regular collaborators for particular projects. "None of the things we have achieved would have been possible without the amazing group we have, the understanding of the ethos, the open mind to keep learning, the many partnerships we have built over the years, and mainly the love for each other and for the planet. We came about from frustration, love and hope," Victoria said. Below is the Constitution which she shared with the group's permission.



2020 Constitution for Sewing Café Lancaster

1. Name

The name of the group shall be **Sewing Café Lancaster**

2. Objects -

- Sewing Café Lancaster promotes wellbeing and advocates sustainability. We believe in connecting with people across the community, to share skills, to reuse, repair and reduce.
- Our work links to - COMMUNITY, EDUCATION & ENTERPRISE:
 - COMMUNITY - Creating links to share and exchange skills and knowledge around wellbeing and sustainability.
 - EDUCATION - Providing opportunities for development of skills and knowledge and awareness of sustainability.
 - ENTERPRISE - Developing, producing, selling goods and facilitating workshops, networking and the development of ideas and projects in other areas of sustainability and to promote economic wellbeing.

3. Membership

- a) Membership of Sewing Café Lancaster is made up of the Core Management Group, who are interested in helping the group to achieve its aims. There is also a wider 'users' group of people interested in partaking in Sewing café activities and are members of the Sewing Cafe Facebook group. This wider group does not have voting rights.
- b) Every member of the Core Management Group shall have one vote at general meetings.
- c) The Core Management Committee shall have the power to refuse membership to an applicant, where it is considered such membership would be detrimental to the aims, or activities of the group.
- d) Registration and termination of membership.

Any member of the association may resign his/her membership and any representative of a member organisation or section may resign such position, by giving to the secretary of the association written notice to that effect.

The Management Committee may, by resolution passed at a meeting thereof, terminate or suspend the membership of any member, if in its opinion his/her conduct is prejudicial to the interests and objects of the association, PROVIDED THAT the individual member shall have the right to be heard by the General Committee before the final decision is made.

4. Equal Opportunities

Sewing Café Lancaster will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.

5. Management

- a. Sewing Café Lancaster shall be administered by a Management Committee of not less than three (3) people and not more than fifteen (15) members elected at the group's Annual General Meeting. Committee Members must be at least 18 years old.
 - b. The officers of the Management Committee shall be:
 - c. Creative Director
 - The Chairperson
 - The Treasurer
 - The Secretary
- and such other officers the group shall deem necessary at the meeting.

The current officers officers for the next year (agreed on November 23rd 2020) are as follows –

Creative Director – Victoria Frausin

Treasurer – Candy Galarza Calderon De McBride

President – Enda O'Regan

Secretary – Katrina Barnish

- d. Voting at Management Committee meetings shall be by show of hands on a majority basis. If there is a tied vote then the chairperson shall have a second vote.
- e. Power to set up sub-groups and working parties as deemed necessary who shall be accountable to the committee.

6. Finance

- Any money obtained by the group shall be used only for the group, unless a majority decide on money being passed to another group that Sewing Café have decided to support eg. Sewing Circle.
- Any bank accounts opened for the group shall be in the name of the group.
- Any cheque issued shall be signed by at least two of any three nominated signatures.
- The Management Committee will ensure that the group stays within the budget.

7. Committee Meetings

- The committee shall meet at least four (4) times each year.
- The quorum (minimum number of people required) for a meeting shall be four (4).
- The committee shall be accountable to the members at all times.

- All meetings must be minuted and available to any interested party.
- All committee members shall be given at least seven (7) days' notice of a meeting unless it is deemed an emergency meeting.

8. Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting shall be held within six months of the close of the financial year of Sewing Café Lancaster, the business of which shall include:

- (i) the receipt of the accounts and balance sheet,
- (ii) the election of Committee Members, if it has been decided to have such a Committee.

The quorum for Annual General Meeting shall be at least five (5) persons of which no more than four (3) shall be committee members.

9. Application of surplus

Sewing Café Lancaster shall not trade for profit. Any surplus of Sewing Café Lancaster shall be used as a general reserve for the continuation and development of Sewing Café Lancaster.

10. Alteration of the Constitution

- Proposals for amendments to this constitution, or dissolution must be delivered to the secretary in writing. The secretary in conjunction with all other officers shall then decide on the date of a meeting to discuss such proposals, giving at least four weeks (28 days) clear notice.
- Any changes to this constitution must be agreed by at least two thirds of those members present and voting at any general meeting.

11. Dissolution

The group may be wound up at any time if agreed by two thirds of those members present and voting at any general meeting. Any assets shall be returned to their providers, if they require it, or shall be passed to another group with similar aims.

12. Adoption of the Constitution

This constitution was adopted by the members present at the AGM held on November 23 November 2020

Appendix 5

Below are the Permaculture Design Principles as published in the back of David Holmgren's book [*Retrosuburbia: The downshifter's guide to a more resilient future*](#). More information on the ethics and principles of permaculture is available at the [Permaculture Principles](#) website.

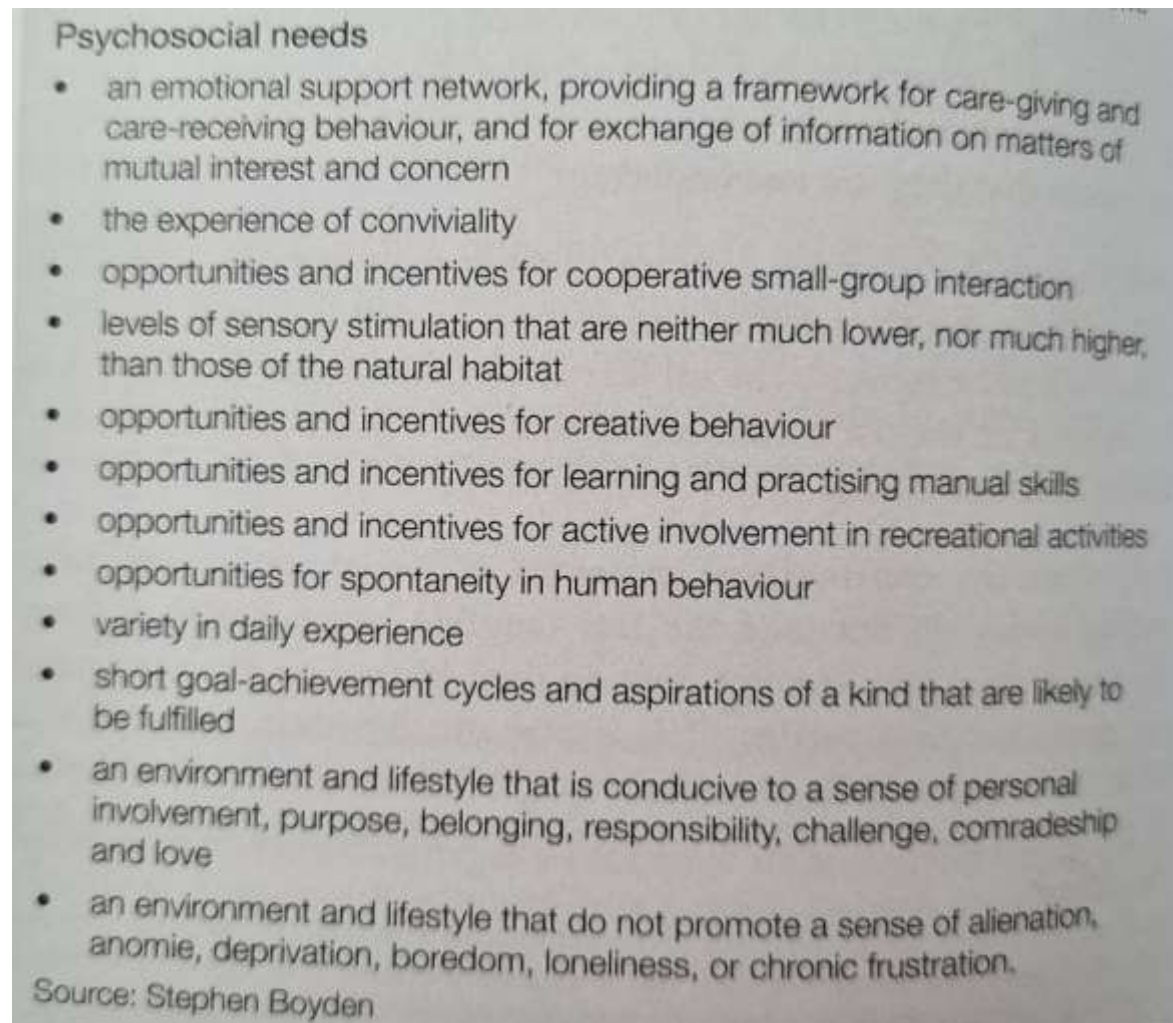
Permaculture co-origins Bill Mollison and David Holmgren developed this applied science back in the 1970s as an ethical and environmental design framework for personal and household self-reliance, rural resettlement and community development. It has been percolating around the world ever since, its relevance proven in affluent and developing countries alike.

Ethics are a guide to what is considered right and wrong in the relations among people, between people and in the larger living world. The ethics guiding permaculture are earth care, people care and fair share. Earth care is about maintaining ecosystems, water and soil, and stewardship by regenerating and rebuilding nature's capital. People care is about nurturing and respecting self, family, community and those further afield. Fair share is about celebrating nature's abundance while accepting and respecting its limitations, taking only what you need and redistributing surplus produce, knowledge and resources.



Appendix 6

The psychosocial needs of humans are identified below by Professor Stephen Boyden, *The Bionarrative: the story of life and hope for the future*, pg 64, 2016, ANU Press



Bibliography

¹ Australian Fashion Council, Clothing Data Report, 2022

² Fletcher K, and Tham M (2019), *Earth Logic Fashion Action Research Plan*, London: The JJ Charitable Trust

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⁵ Professor Stephen Boyden, (2004) *The Biology of Civilisation: understanding human culture as a force in nature*, UNSW Press, pgs 66, 138, 155.

⁶ <https://www.loveyourclothes.org.uk/about/why-love-your-clothes>

⁷ Katherine Wilson (2017), *Tinkering: Australians reinvent DIY culture*, Monash Uni Publishing, pg5-11, 264

⁸ <https://www.dw.com/en/eu-proposes-new-rules-to-tackle-fast-fashion/a-61308009>

⁹ <https://www.thesustainablefashionforum.com/pages/hm-is-being-sued-for-misleading-sustainability-marketing-what-does-this-mean-for-the-future-of-greenwashing>

¹⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2022/may/20/love-island-partners-with-ebay-to-dress-contestants-in-secondhand-outfits>

¹¹ Australian Fashion Council, National Clothing Product Stewardship Scheme [Clothing Data Report](#) 2022, pg 12